

# Lenin

*Experience  
of the CPSU:  
Its World  
Significance*



PROGRESS Publishers



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**В. И. ЛЕНИН**

**О МЕЖДУНАРОДНОМ ЗНАЧЕНИИ ОПЫТА КПСС**

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# ***From What Is To Be Done?***

## ***Burning Questions of Our Movement***

### **Dogmatism and "Freedom of Criticism"**

#### **A. What Does "Freedom of Criticism" Mean?**

"Freedom of criticism" is undoubtedly the most fashionable slogan at the present time, and the one most frequently employed in the controversies between socialists and democrats in all countries. At first sight, nothing would appear to be more strange than the solemn appeals to freedom of criticism made by one of the parties to the dispute. Have voices been raised in the advanced parties against the constitutional law of the majority of European countries which guarantees freedom to science and scientific investigation? "Something must be wrong here", will be the comment of the onlooker who has heard this fashionable slogan repeated at every turn but has not yet penetrated the essence of the disagreement among the disputants; "evidently this slogan is one of the conventional phrases which, like nicknames, become legitimised by use, and become almost generic terms."

In fact, it is no secret for anyone that two trends have taken form in present-day international\* Social-Democracy.

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\* Incidentally, in the history of modern socialism this is a phenomenon, perhaps unique and in its way very consoling, namely, that the strife of the various trends within the socialist movement has from national become international. Formerly, the disputes between Lassalleans and Eisenachers, between Guesdists and Possibilists, between Fabians and Social-Democrats, and between Narodnaya Volya adherents and Social-Democrats, remained confined within purely national frameworks, reflecting purely national features, and proceeding, as it were, on differ-

The conflict between these trends now flares up in a bright flame and now dies down and smoulders under the ashes of imposing "truce resolutions". The essence of the "new" trend, which adopts a "critical" attitude towards "obsolete dogmatic" Marxism, has been clearly enough *presented* by Bernstein and *demonstrated* by Millerand.

Social-Democracy must change from a party of social revolution into a democratic party of social reforms. Bernstein has surrounded this political demand with a whole battery of well-attuned "new" arguments and reasonings. Denied was the possibility of putting socialism on a scientific basis and of demonstrating its necessity and inevitability from the point of view of the materialist conception of history. Denied was the fact of growing impoverishment, the process of proletarianisation, and the intensification of capitalist contradictions; the very concept, "*ultimate aim*", was declared to be unsound, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat was completely rejected. Denied was the antithesis in principle between liberalism and socialism. Denied was *the theory of the class struggle*, on the alleged grounds that it could not be applied to a strictly democratic society governed according to the will of the majority, etc.

Thus, the demand for a decisive turn from revolutionary Social-Democracy to bourgeois social-reformism was accompanied by a no less decisive turn towards bourgeois criticism of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism. In view of the fact that this criticism of Marxism has long been directed from the political platform, from university chairs, in numer-

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ent places. At the present time (as is now evident), the English Fabians, the French Ministerialists, the German Bernsteinians, and the Russian Critics—all belong to the same family, all extol each other, learn from each other, and together take up arms against "dogmatic" Marxism. In this first really international battle with socialist opportunism, international revolutionary Social-Democracy will perhaps become sufficiently strengthened to put an end to the political reaction that has long reigned in Europe?

ous pamphlets and in a series of learned treatises, in view of the fact that the entire younger generation of the educated classes has been systematically reared for decades on this criticism, it is not surprising that the "new critical" trend in Social-Democracy should spring up, all complete, like Minerva from the head of Jove. The content of this new trend did not have to grow and take shape, it was transferred bodily from bourgeois to socialist literature.

To proceed. If Bernstein's theoretical criticism and political yearnings were still unclear to anyone, the French took the trouble strikingly to demonstrate the "new method". In this instance, too, France has justified its old reputation of being "the land where, more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision..." (Engels, Introduction to Marx's *Der 18 Brumaire*).\* The French socialists have begun, not to theorise, but to act. The democratically more highly developed political conditions in France have permitted them to put "Bernsteinism into practice" immediately, with all its consequences. Millerand has furnished an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism; not without reason did Bernstein and Vollmar rush so zealously to defend and laud him. Indeed, if Social-Democracy, in essence, is merely a party of reform and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then not only has a socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, but he must always strive to do so. If democracy, in essence, means the abolition of class domination, then why should not a socialist minister charm the whole bourgeois world by orations on class collaboration? Why should he not remain in the cabinet even after the shooting-down of workers by gendarmes has exposed, for the hundredth and thousandth time, the real nature of the democratic collaboration of classes? Why should he not personally take part in greeting the tsar, for whom the French socialists now have

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\* The reference is to Engels' Preface to Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*.—Ed.

no other name than hero of the gallows, knout, and exile (*knouteur, pendeur et déportateur*)? And the reward for this utter humiliation and self-degradation of socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the socialist consciousness of the working masses—the only basis that can guarantee our victory—the reward for this is pompous *projects* for miserable reforms, so miserable in fact that much more has been obtained from bourgeois governments!

He who does not deliberately close his eyes cannot fail to see that the new “critical” trend in socialism is nothing more nor less than a new variety of *opportunism*. And if we judge people, not by the glittering uniforms they don or by the high-sounding appellations they give themselves, but by their actions and by what they actually advocate, it will be clear that “freedom of criticism” means freedom for an opportunist trend in Social-Democracy, freedom to convert Social-Democracy into a democratic party of reform, freedom to introduce bourgeois ideas and bourgeois elements into socialism.

“Freedom” is a grand word, but under the banner of freedom for industry the most predatory wars were waged, under the banner of freedom of labour, the working people were robbed. The modern use of the term “freedom of criticism” contains the same inherent falsehood. Those who are really convinced that they have made progress in science would not demand freedom for the new views to continue side by side with the old, but the substitution of the new views for the old. The cry heard today, “Long live freedom of criticism”, is too strongly reminiscent of the fable of the empty barrel.

We are marching in a compact group along a precipitous and difficult path, firmly holding each other by the hand. We are surrounded on all sides by enemies, and we have to advance almost constantly under their fire. We have combined, by a freely adopted decision, for the purpose of fighting the enemy, and not of retreating into the neighbouring

marsh, the inhabitants of which, from the very outset, have reproached us with having separated ourselves into an exclusive group and with having chosen the path of struggle instead of the path of conciliation. And now some among us begin to cry out: Let us go into the marsh! And when we begin to shame them, they retort: What backward people you are! Are you not ashamed to deny us the liberty to invite you to take a better road! Oh, yes, gentlemen! You are free not only to invite us, but to go yourselves wherever you will, even into the marsh. In fact, we think that the marsh is your proper place, and we are prepared to render *you* every assistance to get there. Only let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word freedom, for we too are "free" to go where we please, free to fight not only against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh!

#### D. Engels on the Importance of the Theoretical Struggle

"Dogmatism, doctrinairism", "ossification of the party—the inevitable retribution that follows the violent strait-lacing of thought"—these are the enemies against which the knightly champions of "freedom of criticism" in *Rabocheye Dyelo* rise up in arms. We are very glad that this question has been placed on the order of the day and we would only propose to add to it one other:

And who are the judges?

We have before us two publishers' announcements. One, "The Programme of the Periodical Organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad—*Rabocheye Dyelo*" (reprint from No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*), and the other, the "Announcement of the Resumption of the Publications of the Emancipation of Labour Group". Both are dated 1899, when the "crisis of Marxism" had long been under discussion. And what do we find? We would seek in vain in the first announcement for any reference to this phenomenon, or

a definite statement of the position the new organ intends to adopt on this question. Not a word is said about theoretical work and the urgent tasks that now confront it, either in this programme or in the supplements to it that were adopted by the Third Congress of the Union Abroad in 1901 (*Two Conferences*, pp. 15-18). During this entire time the Editorial Board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* ignored theoretical questions, in spite of the fact that these were questions that disturbed the minds of all Social-Democrats the world over.

The other announcement, on the contrary, points first of all to the declining interest in theory in recent years, imperatively demands "vigilant attention to the theoretical aspect of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat", and calls for "ruthless criticism of the Bernsteinian and other anti-revolutionary tendencies" in our movement. The issues of *Zarya* to date show how this programme has been carried out.

Thus, we see that high-sounding phrases against the ossification of thought, etc., conceal unconcern and helplessness with regard to the development of theoretical thought. The case of the Russian Social-Democrats manifestly illustrates the general European phenomenon (long ago noted also by the German Marxists) that the much vaunted freedom of criticism does not imply substitution of one theory for another, but freedom from all integral and pondered theory; it implies eclecticism and lack of principle. Those who have the slightest acquaintance with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism was accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of theoretical training joined the movement because of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can judge from that how tactless *Rabocheye Dyelo* is when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes." To repeat these words in a period of theoretical disorder is like wishing mourners at a funeral many



happy returns of the day. Moreover, these words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme, in which he *sharply condemns* eclecticism in the formulation of principles. If you must unite, Marx wrote to the party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but do not allow any bargaining over principles, do not make theoretical "concessions". This was Marx's idea, and yet there are people among us who seek—in his name—to belittle the significance of theory!

Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This idea cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity. Yet, for Russian Social-Democrats the importance of theory is enhanced by three other circumstances, which are often forgotten: first, by the fact that our Party is only in process of formation, its features are only just becoming defined, and it has as yet far from settled accounts with the other trends of revolutionary thought that threaten to divert the movement from the correct path. On the contrary, precisely the very recent past was marked by a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary trends (an eventuation regarding which Axelrod long ago warned the Economists). Under these circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an "unimportant" error may lead to most deplorable consequences, and only short-sighted people can consider factional disputes and a strict differentiation between shades of opinion inopportune or superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for very many years to come may depend on the strengthening of one or the other "shade".

Secondly, the Social-Democratic movement is in its very essence an international movement. This means, not only that we must combat national chauvinism, but that an incipient movement in a young country can be successful only if it makes use of the experiences of other countries. In order to make use of these experiences it is not enough

merely to be acquainted with them, or simply to copy out the latest resolutions. What is required is the ability to treat these experiences critically and to test them independently. He who realises how enormously the modern working-class movement has grown and branched out will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to carry out this task.

Thirdly, the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other socialist party in the world. We shall have occasion further on to deal with the political and organisational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At this point, we wish to state only that *the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory*. To have a concrete understanding of what this means, let the reader recall such predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy as Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, and the brilliant galaxy of revolutionaries of the seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which Russian literature is now acquiring; let him . . . but be that enough!

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognises, *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, *but three, placing the theoretical struggle on a par with the first two*. His recommendations to the German working-class movement, which had become strong, practically and politically, are so instructive from the standpoint of present-day problems and controversies, that we hope the reader will not be vexed with us for quoting a long passage from his prefatory note to *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*\*, which has long become a great bibliographical rarity:

\* Dritter Abdruck. Leipzig, 1875. Verlag der Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei. (*The Peasant War in Germany*. Third impression. Co-operative Publishers, Leipzig, 1875.—Ed.)

"The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; and they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called 'educated' classes of Germany have almost completely lost. Without German philosophy, which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific socialism—the only scientific socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scientific socialism would never have entered their flesh and blood as much as is the case. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory, which is one of the main reasons why the English working-class movement crawls along so slowly in spite of the splendid organisation of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism, in its original form, among the French and Belgians, and, in the form further caricatured by Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.

"The second advantage is that, chronologically speaking, the Germans were about the last to come into the workers' movement. Just as German theoretical socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen—three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and all their utopianism, have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things, the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us—so the practical workers' movement in Germany ought never to forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilise their dearly bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the precedent of the English trade unions and French workers' political struggles, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?

"It must be said to the credit of the German workers that

they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers' movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted pursuant to its three sides—the theoretical, the political, and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalists)—in harmony and in its interconnections, and in a systematic way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack, that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

"Due to this advantageous situation, on the one hand, and to the insular peculiarities of the English and the forcible suppression of the French movement, on the other, the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But let us hope that as long as they occupy it, they will fill it fittingly. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. In particular, it will be the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, i.e., that it be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever more clarified understanding thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organisation both of the party and of the trade unions. . . .

"If the German workers progress in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any particular country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line; and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events demand of them increased courage, increased determination and energy."

Engels' words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly grave trials

in the form of the Exceptional Law Against the Socialists. And they met those trials armed for battle and succeeded in emerging from them victorious.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably graver; it will have to fight a monster compared with which an anti-socialist law in a constitutional country seems but a dwarf. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks confronting the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we have the right to count upon acquiring this honourable title, already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement which is a thousand times broader and deeper, with the same devoted determination and vigour.

### **The "Plan" for an All-Russian Political Newspaper**

#### **B. Can a Newspaper Be a Collective Organiser?**

The quintessence of the article "Where To Begin"\* consists in the fact that it discusses *precisely* this question and gives an affirmative reply to it. As far as we know, the only attempt to examine this question on its merits and to prove that it must be answered in the negative was made by L. Nadezhdin, whose argument we reproduce in full:

"...It pleased us greatly to see *Iskra* (No. 4) present the question of the need for an All-Russian newspaper; but we cannot agree that this presentation bears relevance to the title 'Where To Begin'. Un-

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\* The reference is to Lenin's article "Where to Begin" published in issue No. 4 of *Iskra* for 1901.—Ed.

doubtedly this is an extremely important matter, but neither a newspaper, nor a series of popular leaflets, nor a mountain of manifestos, can serve as the basis for a militant organisation in revolutionary times. We must set to work to build strong political organisations in the localities. We lack such organisations; we have been carrying on our work mainly among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle. *If strong political organisations are not trained locally, what significance will even an excellently organised All-Russian newspaper have?* It will be a burning bush, burning without being consumed, but firing no one! *Iskra* thinks that round it and in the activities in its behalf people will gather and organise. *But they will find it far easier to gather and organise round activities that are more concrete.* This something more concrete must and should be the extensive organisation of local newspapers, the immediate preparation of the workers' forces for demonstrations, the constant activity of local organisations among the unemployed (indefatigable distribution of pamphlets and leaflets, convening of meetings, appeals to actions of protest against the government, etc.). We must begin live political work in the localities, and when the time comes to unite on this real basis, it will not be an artificial, paper unity; not by means of newspapers can such a unification of local work into an All-Russian cause be achieved!" (*The Eve of the Revolution*, p. 54.)

We have emphasised the passages in this eloquent tirade that most clearly show the author's incorrect judgement of our plan, as well as the incorrectness of his point of view in general, which is here contraposed to that of *Iskra*. Unless we train strong political organisations in the localities, even an excellently organised All-Russian newspaper will be of no avail. This is incontrovertible. But the whole point is that *there is no other way of training* strong political organisations except through the medium of an All-Russian newspaper. The author missed the most important statement *Iskra* made *before it proceeded* to set forth its "plan": that it was necessary "to call for the formation of a revolutionary organisation, capable of uniting all forces and guiding the movement in actual practice and *not in name alone*, that is, *an organisation ready at any time to support every protest and every outbreak* and use it to build up and consolidate the fighting forces suitable for the decisive struggle". But

now after the February and March events, everyone will agree with this in principle, continues *Iskra*. Yet what we need is not a solution of the question in principle, but its *practical solution*; we must immediately advance a definite constructive plan through which all may immediately set to work to build *from every side*. Now we are again being dragged away from the practical solution towards something which in principle is correct, indisputable, and great, but which is entirely inadequate and incomprehensible to the broad masses of workers, namely, "to rear strong political organisations"! This is not the point at issue, most worthy author. The point is *how* to go about the rearing and how to accomplish it.

It is not true to say that "we have been carrying on our work mainly among enlightened workers, while the masses have been engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle". Presented in such a form, the thesis reduces itself to *Svoboda's* usual but fundamentally false contraposition of the enlightened workers to the "masses". In recent years, even the enlightened workers have been "engaged almost exclusively in the economic struggle". That is the first point. On the other hand, the masses will never learn to conduct the political struggle until we help *to train* leaders for this struggle, both from among the enlightened workers and from among the intellectuals. Such leaders can acquire training *solely* by systematically evaluating *all* the everyday aspects of our political life, *all attempts* at protest and struggle on the part of the various classes on various grounds. Therefore, to talk of "rearing political organisations" and at the same time *to contrast* the "paper work" of a political newspaper to "live political work in the localities" is plainly ridiculous. *Iskra* has adapted its "plan" for a newspaper to the "plan" for creating a "militant preparedness" to support the unemployed movement, peasant revolts, discontent among the Zemstvo people, "popular indignation against some tsarist bashi-bazouk on the rampage", etc. Any one who is at all acquainted with the movement knows fully

well that the vast majority of local organisations have *never even dreamed* of these things; that many of the prospects of "live political work" here indicated *have never* been realised by a single organisation; that the attempt, for example, to call attention to the growth of discontent and protest among the Zemstvo intelligentsia rouses feelings of consternation and perplexity in Nadezhdin ("Good Lord, is this newspaper intended for Zemstvo people?"—*The Eve*, p. 129), among the Economists (Letter to *Iskra*, No. 12), and among many practical workers. Under these circumstances, it is possible to "begin" *only* by inducing people *to think* about all these things, to summarise and generalise all the divers signs of ferment and active struggle. In our time, when Social-Democratic tasks are being degraded, *the only way* "live political work" can be *begun* is with live political agitation, which is impossible unless we have an All-Russian newspaper, frequently issued and regularly distributed.

Those who regard the *Iskra* "plan" as a manifestation of "bookishness" have totally failed to understand its substance and take for the goal that which is suggested as the most suitable means for the present time. These people have not taken the trouble to study the two comparisons that were drawn to present a clear illustration of the plan. *Iskra* wrote: The publication of an All-Russian political newspaper must be *the main line* by which we may unswervingly develop, deepen, and expand the organisation (viz., the revolutionary organisation that is ever ready to support every protest and every outbreak). Pray tell me, when bricklayers lay bricks in various parts of an enormous, unprecedentedly large structure, is it "paper" work to use a line to help them find the correct place for the bricklaying; to indicate to them the ultimate goal of the common work; to enable them to use, not only every brick, but even every piece of brick which, cemented to the bricks laid before and after it, forms a finished, continuous line? And are we not now passing through precisely such a period in our



Party life when we have bricks and bricklayers, but lack the guide line for all to see and follow? Let them shout that in stretching out the line, we want to command. Had we desired to command, gentlemen, we would have written on the title page, not "*Iskra*, No. 1", but "*Rabochaya Gazeta*, No. 3", as we were invited to do by certain comrades, and *as we would have had a perfect right to do* after the events described above. But we did not do that. We wished to have our hands free to wage an irreconcilable struggle against all pseudo-Social-Democrats; we wanted our line, if properly laid, to be respected because it was correct, and not because it had been laid by an official organ.

"The question of uniting local activity in central bodies runs in a vicious circle," Nadezhdin lectures us; "unification requires homogeneity of the elements, and the homogeneity can be created only by something that unites; but the unifying element may be the product of strong local organisations which at the present time are by no means distinguished for their homogeneity." This truth is as revered and as irrefutable as that we must train strong political organisations. And it is equally barren. *Every* question "runs in a vicious circle" because political life as a whole is an endless chain consisting of an infinite number of links. The whole art of politics lies in finding and taking as firm a grip as we can of the link that is least likely to be struck from our hands, the one that is most important at the given moment, the one that most of all guarantees its possessor the possession of the whole chain.\* If we had a crew of experienced bricklayers who had learned to work so well together that they could lay their bricks exactly as required without a guide line (which, speaking abstractly, is by no means impossible), then perhaps we might take hold of some other link. But it is unfortunate

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\* Comrade Krichevsky and Comrade Martynov! I call your attention to this outrageous manifestation of "autocracy", "uncontrolled authority", "supreme regulating", etc. Just think of it: a desire to *possess* the whole chain! Send in a complaint at once. Here you have a ready-made topic for two leading articles for No. 12 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*!

that as yet we have no experienced bricklayers trained for teamwork, that bricks are often laid where they are not needed at all, that they are not laid according to the general line, but are so scattered that the enemy can shatter the structure as if it were made of sand and not of bricks.

Another comparison: "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organiser. In this respect *it may be compared to the scaffolding* erected round a building under construction; it marks the contours of the structure and facilitates communication between the builders, permitting them to distribute the work and to view the common results achieved by their organised labour."\* Does this sound anything like the attempt of an armchair author to exaggerate his role? The scaffolding is not required at all for the dwelling; it is made of cheaper material, is put up only temporarily, and is scrapped for firewood as soon as the shell of the structure is completed. As for the building of revolutionary organisations, experience shows that sometimes they may be built without scaffolding, as the seventies showed. But at the present time we cannot even imagine the possibility of erecting the building we require without scaffolding.

Nadezhdin disagrees with this, saying: "*Iskra* thinks that around it and in the activities in its behalf people will gather and organise. *But they will find it far easier to gather and organise around activities that are more concrete!*" Indeed, "far easier around activities that are more concrete". A Russian proverb holds: "Don't spit into a well, you may want to drink from it". But there are people who do not object to drinking from a well that has been spat into. What despicable things our magnificent, legal "Critics of Marxism" and illegal admirers of *Rabochaya Mysl* have said in the name of this something more concrete! How restricted our

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\* Martynov, in quoting the first sentence of this passage in *Rabocheye Dyelo* (No. 10, p. 62), omitted the second, as if desiring to emphasise either his unwillingness to discuss the essentials of the question or his inability to understand them.

movement is by our own narrowness, lack of initiative, and hesitation, which are justified with the traditional argument about finding it "far easier to gather around something more concrete"! And Nadezhdin—who regards himself as possessing a particularly keen sense of the "realities of life", who so severely condemns "armchair" authors and (with pretensions to wit) accuses *Iskra* of a weakness for seeing Economism everywhere, and who sees himself standing far above the division between the orthodox and the Critics—fails to see that with his arguments he contributes to the narrowness that arouses his indignation and that he is drinking from the most spat-in well! The sincerest indignation against narrowness, the most passionate desire to raise its worshippers from their knees, will not suffice if the indignant one is swept along without sail or rudder, and, as "spontaneously" as the revolutionaries of the seventies, clutches at such things as "excitative terror", "agrarian terror", "sounding the tocsin", etc. Let us take a glance at these "more concrete" activities around which he thinks it will be "far easier" to gather and organise: (1) local newspapers; (2) preparations for demonstrations; (3) work among the unemployed. It is immediately apparent that all these things have been seized upon at random as a pretext for saying something; for, however we may regard them, it would be absurd to see in them anything especially suitable for "gathering and organising". The selfsame Nadezhdin says a few pages further: "It is time we simply stated the fact that activity of a very pitiable kind is being carried on in the localities, the committees are not doing a tenth of what they could do . . . the co-ordinating centres we have at present are the purest fiction, representing a sort of revolutionary bureaucracy, whose members mutually grant generalships to one another; and so it will continue until strong local organisations grow up". These remarks, though exaggerating the position somewhat, no doubt contain many a bitter truth; but can it be said that Nadezhdin does not perceive the connection between the pitiable activity in the localities and the narrow mental

outlook of the functionaries, the narrow scope of their activities, inevitable in the circumstances of the lack of training of Party workers confined to local organisations? Has he, like the author of the article on organisation, published in *Svoboda*, forgotten how the transition to a broad local press (from 1898) was accompanied by a strong intensification of Economism and "primitiveness"? Even if a "broad local press" could be established at all satisfactorily (and we have shown this to be impossible, save in very exceptional cases)—even then the local organs could not "gather and organise" *all* the revolutionary forces for a *general* attack upon the autocracy and for leadership of the *united* struggle. Let us not forget that we are here discussing *only* the "rallying", organising significance of the newspaper and we could put to Nadezhdin, who defends fragmentation, the question he himself has ironically put: "Have we been left a legacy of 200,000 revolutionary organisers"? Furthermore, "preparations for demonstrations" cannot be *contraposed* to *Iskra's* plan, for the very reason that this plan includes the organisation of the broadest possible demonstrations *as one of its aims*; the point under discussion is the selection of the practical *means*. On this point also Nadezhdin is confused, for he has lost sight of the fact that only forces that are "gathered and organised" can "prepare for" demonstrations (which hitherto, in the overwhelming majority of cases, have taken place spontaneously) and that we *lack* precisely *the ability* to rally and organise. "Work among the unemployed." Again the same confusion; for this too represents one of the field operations of the mobilised forces and not a plan for mobilising the forces. The extent to which Nadezhdin here too underestimates the harm caused by our fragmentation, by our lack of "200,000 organisers", can be seen from the fact that many people (including Nadezhdin) have reproached *Iskra* for the paucity of the news it gives on unemployment and for the casual nature of the correspondence it publishes about the most common affairs of rural life. The reproach is justified; but *Iskra* is "guilty without sin". We strive

“to stretch a line” through the countryside too, where there are hardly any bricklayers anywhere, and we are *obliged* to encourage *everyone* who informs us even as regards the most common facts, in the hope that this will increase the number of our contributors in the given field and will ultimately *train us all* to select facts that are really the most outstanding. But the material on which we can train is so scanty that, unless we generalise it for the whole of Russia, we shall have very little to train on at all. No doubt, one with at least as much ability as an agitator and as much knowledge of the life of the vagrant as Nadezhdin manifests could render priceless service to the movement by carrying on agitation among the unemployed; but such a person would be simply hiding his light under a bushel if he failed to inform *all* comrades in Russia as regards every step he took in his work, so that others, who, in the mass, still lack the ability to undertake new kinds of work, might learn from his example.

All without exception now talk of the importance of unity, of the necessity for “gathering and organising”; but in the majority of cases what is lacking is a definite idea of where to begin and how to bring about this unity. Probably all will agree that if we “unite”, say, the district circles in a given town, it will be necessary to have for this purpose *common institutions*, i.e., not merely the common title of “League”, but genuinely *common* work, exchange of material, experience, and forces, distribution of functions, not only by districts, but through specialisation on a town-wide scale. All will agree that a big secret apparatus will not pay its way (to use a commercial expression) “with the resources” (in both money and manpower, of course) of a single district, and that this narrow field will not provide sufficient scope for a specialist to develop his talents. But the same thing applies to the co-ordination of activities of a number of towns, since even a specific locality *will be* and, in the history of our Social-Democratic movement, has proved to be, far too narrow a field; we have demonstrated this above

in detail with regard to political agitation and organisational work. What we require foremost and imperatively is to broaden the field, establish *real* contacts between the towns on the basis of *regular, common* work; for fragmentation weighs down on the people and they are "stuck in a hole" (to use the expression employed by a correspondent to *Iskra*), not knowing what is happening in the world, from whom to learn, or how to acquire experience and satisfy their desire to engage in broad activities. I continue to insist that we can *start* establishing *real* contacts only with the aid of a common newspaper, as the only regular, All-Russian enterprise, one which will summarise the results of the most divers forms of activity and thereby *stimulate* people to march forward untiringly along *all* the innumerable paths leading to revolution, in the same way as all roads lead to Rome. If we do not want unity in name only, we must arrange for all local study circles *immediately to assign*, say, a fourth of their forces to *active* work for the *common* cause, and the newspaper will immediately convey to them\* the general design, scope, and character of the cause; it will give them a precise indication of the most keenly felt shortcomings in the All-Russian activity where agitation is lacking and contacts are weak, and it will point out which little wheels in the vast general mechanism a given study circle might repair or replace with better ones. A study circle that has not yet begun to work, but which is only just seeking activity, could then start, not like a craftsman in an isolated little workshop unaware of the earlier development in "industry" or of the general level of production methods prevailing in industry, but as a participant

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\* *A reservation*: that is, if a given study circle sympathises with the policy of the newspaper and considers it useful to become a collaborator, meaning by that, not only for literary collaboration, but for revolutionary collaboration generally. *Note for Rabocheye Dyelo*: Among revolutionaries who attach value to the cause and not to playing at democracy, who do not separate "sympathy" from the most active and lively participation, this reservation is taken for granted.

in an extensive enterprise that *reflects* the whole general revolutionary attack on the autocracy. The more perfect the finish of each little wheel and the larger the number of detail workers engaged in the common cause, the closer will our network become and the less will be the disorder in the ranks consequent on inevitable police raids.

The mere function of distributing a newspaper would help to establish *actual* contacts (if it is a newspaper worthy of the name, i.e., if it is issued regularly, not once a month like a magazine, but at least four times a month). At the present time, communication between towns on revolutionary business is an extreme rarity, and, at all events, is the exception rather than the rule. If we had a newspaper, however, such communication would become the rule and would secure, not only the distribution of the newspaper, of course, but (what is more important) an exchange of experience, of material, of forces, and of resources. Organisational work would immediately acquire much greater scope, and the success of one locality would serve as a standing encouragement to further perfection; it would arouse the desire to utilise the experience gained by comrades working in other parts of the country. Local work would become far richer and more varied than it is at present. Political and economic exposures gathered from all over Russia would provide mental food for workers of all trades and *all stages of development*; they would provide material and occasion for talks and readings on the most divers subjects, which would, in addition, be suggested by hints in the legal press, by talk among the people, and by "shamefaced" government statements. Every outbreak, every demonstration, would be weighed and discussed in its every aspect in all parts of Russia and would thus stimulate a desire to keep up with, and even surpass, the others (we socialists do not by any means flatly reject all emulation or all "competition"!) and consciously prepare that which at first, as it were, sprang up spontaneously, a desire to take advantage of the favourable conditions in a given district or at a given

moment for modifying the plan of attack, etc. At the same time, this revival of local work would obviate that desperate, "convulsive" exertion of *all* efforts and risking of *all* forces which every single demonstration or the publication of every single issue of a local newspaper now frequently entails. On the one hand, the police would find it much more difficult to get at the "roots", if they did not know in what district to dig down for them. On the other hand, regular common work would train our people to adjust the force of a *given* attack to the strength of the given contingent of the common army (at the present time hardly anyone ever thinks of doing that, because in nine cases out of ten these attacks occur spontaneously); such regular common work would facilitate the "transportation" from one place to another, not only of literature, but also of revolutionary forces.

In a great many cases these forces are now being bled white on restricted local work, but under the circumstances we are discussing it would be possible to transfer a capable agitator or organiser from one end of the country to the other, and the occasion for doing this would constantly arise. Beginning with short journeys on Party business at the Party's expense, the comrades would become accustomed to being maintained by the Party, to becoming professional revolutionaries, and to training themselves as real political leaders.

And if indeed we succeeded in reaching the point when all, or at least a considerable majority, of the local committees, local groups, and study circles took up active work for the common cause, we could, in the not distant future, establish a weekly newspaper for regular distribution in tens of thousands of copies throughout Russia. This newspaper would become part of an enormous pair of smith's bellows that would fan every spark of the class struggle and of popular indignation into a general conflagration. Around what is in itself still a very innocuous and very small, but regular and *common*, effort, in the full sense of the word, a



regular army of tried fighters would systematically gather and receive their training. On the ladders and scaffolding of this general organisational structure there would soon develop and come to the fore Social-Democratic Zhelyabovs from among our revolutionaries and Russian Bebels from among our workers, who would take their place at the head of the mobilised army and rouse the whole people to settle accounts with the shame and the curse of Russia.

That is what we should dream of!

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"We should dream!" I wrote these words and became alarmed. I imagined myself sitting at a "unity conference" and opposite me were the *Rabocheye Dyelo* editors and contributors. Comrade Martynov rises and, turning to me, says sternly: "Permit me to ask you, has an autonomous editorial board the right to dream without first soliciting the opinion of the Party committees?" He is followed by Comrade Krichevsky, who (philosophically deepening Comrade Martynov, who long ago rendered Comrade Plekhanov more profound) continues even more sternly: "I go further. I ask, has a Marxist any right at all to dream, knowing that according to Marx mankind always sets itself the tasks it can solve and that tactics is a process of the growth of Party tasks which grow together with the Party?"

The very thought of these stern questions sends a cold shiver down my spine and makes me wish for nothing but a place to hide in. I shall try to hide behind the back of Pisarev.

"There are rifts and rifts", wrote Pisarev of the rift between dreams and reality. "My dream may run ahead of the natural march of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural march of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and augment the energy of the working men. . . . There is nothing in such dreams that would distort or paralyse labour-power. On the contrary, if man were completely

deprived of the ability to dream in this way, if he could not from time to time run ahead and mentally conceive, in an entire and completed picture, the product to which his hands are only just beginning to lend shape, then I cannot at all imagine what stimulus there would be to induce man to undertake and complete extensive and strenuous work in the sphere of art, science, and practical endeavour.... The rift between dreams and reality causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the air, and if, generally speaking, he works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well.”\*

Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And the people most responsible for this are those who boast of their sober views, their “closeness” to the “concrete”, the representatives of legal criticism and of illegal “tail-ism”.

### C. What Type of Organisation Do We Require?

From what has been said the reader will see that our “tactics-as-plan” consists in rejecting an immediate *call* for assault; in demanding “to lay effective siege to the enemy fortress”; or, in other words, in demanding that all efforts be directed towards gathering, organising, and *mobilising* a permanent army. When we ridiculed *Rabocheye Dyelo* for its leap from Economism to shouting for an assault (for which it clamoured in *April* 1901, in “*Listok*” *Rabocheyo Dyela*, No. 6), it of course came down on us with accusations of being “doctrinaire”, of failing to understand our revolutionary duty, of calling for caution, etc. Of course, we were not in the least surprised to hear these accusations from those

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\* Quoted from D. I. Pisarev's article “Blunders of Immature Thinking”.—Ed.

who totally lack principles and who evade all arguments by references to a profound "tactics-as-process", any more than we were surprised by the fact that these charges were repeated by Nadezhdin, who in general has a supreme contempt for durable programmes and the fundamentals of tactics.

It is said that history does not repeat itself. But Nadezhdin exerts every effort to cause it to repeat itself and he zealously imitates Tkachov in strongly condemning "revolutionary culturism", in shouting about "sounding the tocsin" and about a special "eve-of-the-revolution point of view", etc. Apparently, he has forgotten the well-known maxim that while an original historical event represents a tragedy, its replica is merely a farce. The attempt to seize power, which was prepared by the preaching of Tkachov and carried out by means of the "terrifying" terror that did really terrify, had grandeur, but the "excitative" terror of a Tkachov the Little is simply ludicrous, particularly so when it is supplemented with the idea of an organisation of average people.

"If *Iskra* would only emerge from its sphere of bookishness", wrote Nadezhdin, "it would realise that these [instances like the worker's letter to *Iskra*, No. 7, etc.] are symptoms of the fact that soon, very soon, the 'assault' will begin, and to speak now [*sic!*] of an organisation linked with an All-Russian newspaper means to propagate armchair ideas and armchair activity." What an unimaginable muddle—on the one hand, excitative terror and an "organisation of average people", along with the opinion that it is far "easier" to gather around something "more concrete", like a local newspaper, and, on the other, the view that to talk "now" about an All-Russian organisation means to propagate armchair thoughts, or, bluntly put, "now" it is already too late! But what of the "extensive organisation of local newspapers"—is it not too late for that, my dear L. Nadezhdin? And compare with this *Iskra's* point of view and tactical line: excitative terror is nonsense; to talk of an organisation

of average people and of the *extensive* publication of local newspapers means to fling the door wide open to Economism. We must speak of a single All-Russian organisation of revolutionaries, and it will never be too late to talk of that until the real, not a paper, assault begins.

"Yes, as far as organisation is concerned the situation is anything but brilliant", continues Nadezhdin. "Yes, *Iskra* is entirely right in saying that the mass of our fighting forces consists of volunteers and insurgents. . . . You do well to give such a sober picture of the state of our forces. But why, at the same time, do you forget that *the masses are not ours at all*, and consequently, *will not ask us* when to begin military operations; they will simply go and 'rebel'. . . . When the crowd itself breaks out with its elemental destructive force it *may* overwhelm and sweep aside the 'regular troops' among whom we prepared all the time to introduce extremely systematic organisation but never *managed* to do so." (Our italics.)

Astounding logic! *For the very reason* that the "masses are not ours" it is stupid and unseemly to shout about an immediate "assault", for assault means attack by regular troops and not a spontaneous mass upsurge. For the very reason that the masses *may* overwhelm and sweep aside the regular troops we must without fail "manage to keep up" with the spontaneous upsurge by our work of "introducing extremely systematic organisation" in the regular troops, for the more we "manage" to introduce such organisation the more probably will the regular troops not be overwhelmed by the masses, but will take their place at their head. Nadezhdin is confused because he imagines that troops in the course of systematic organisation are engaged in something that isolates them from the masses, when in actuality they are engaged exclusively in all-sided and all-embracing political agitation, i.e., precisely in work that *brings closer and merges into a single whole* the elemental destructive force of the masses and the conscious destructive force of the organisation of revolutionaries. You, gentlemen, wish to lay the blame where it does not belong. For it is precisely the *Svoboda* group that, by including terror in its programme, calls for an organisation of terrorists, and such an or-

ganisation would indeed prevent our troops from establishing closer contacts with the masses, which, unfortunately, are still not ours, and which, unfortunately, do not yet ask us, or rarely ask us, when and how to launch their military operations.

"We shall miss the revolution itself," continues Nadezhdin in his attempt to scare *Iskra*, "in the same way as we missed the recent events, which came upon us like a bolt from the blue." This sentence, taken in connection with what has been quoted above, clearly demonstrates the absurdity of the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view" invented by *Svoboda*.\* Plainly put, this special "point of view" boils down to this that it is too late "now" to discuss and prepare. If that is the case, most worthy opponent of "bookishness", what was the use of writing a pamphlet of 132 pages on "questions of theory\*\* and tactics"? Don't you think it would have been more becoming for the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view" to have issued 132,000 leaflets containing the summary call, "Bang them—knock 'em down!"?

Those who make nation-wide political agitation the cor-

\* *The Eve of the Revolution*, p. 62.

\*\* In his *Review of Questions of Theory*, Nadezhdin, by the way, made almost no contribution whatever to the discussion of questions of theory, apart, perhaps, from the following passage, a most peculiar one from the "eve-of-the-revolution point of view": "Bernsteinism, on the whole, is losing its acuteness for us at the present moment, as is the question whether Mr. Adamovich will prove that Mr. Struve has already earned a lacing, or, on the contrary, whether Mr. Struve will refute Mr. Adamovich and will refuse to resign—it really makes no difference, because the hour of revolution has struck" (p. 110). One can hardly imagine a more glaring illustration of Nadezhdin's infinite disregard for theory. We have proclaimed "the eve of the revolution", therefore "it really makes no difference" whether or not the orthodox will succeed in finally driving the Critics from their positions! Our wiseacre fails to see that it is precisely during the revolution that we shall stand in need of the results of our theoretical battles with the Critics in order to be able resolutely to combat their *practical* positions!

ner-stone of their programme, *their tactics, and their organisational work*, as *Iskra* does, stand the least risk of missing the revolution. The people who are now engaged throughout Russia in weaving the network of connections that spread from the All-Russian newspaper not only did not miss the spring events, but, on the contrary, gave us an opportunity to foretell them. Nor did they miss the demonstrations that were described in *Iskra*, Nos. 13 and 14; on the contrary, they took part in them, clearly realising that it was their duty to come to the aid of the spontaneously rising masses and, at the same time, through the medium of the newspaper, help all the comrades in Russia to inform themselves of the demonstrations and to make use of their gathered experience. And if they live they will not miss the revolution, which, first and foremost, will demand of us experience in agitation, ability to support (in a Social-Democratic manner) every protest, as well as direct the spontaneous movement, while safeguarding it from the mistakes of friends and the traps of enemies.

We have thus come to the last reason that compels us so strongly to insist on the plan of an organisation centred round an All-Russian newspaper, through the common work for the common newspaper. Only such organisation will ensure the *flexibility* required of a militant Social-Democratic organisation, viz., the ability to adapt itself immediately to the most divers and rapidly changing conditions of struggle, the ability, "on the one hand, to avoid an open battle against an overwhelming enemy, when the enemy has concentrated all his forces at one spot and yet, on the other, to take advantage of his unwieldiness and to attack him when and where he least expects it".\* It would be a grievous error

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\* *Iskra*, No. 4, "Where To Begin". "Revolutionary culturists, who do not accept the eve-of-the-revolution point of view, are not in the least perturbed by the prospect of working for a long period of time," writes Nadeshdin (p. 62). This brings us to observe: Unless we are able to devise political tactics and an organisational plan for work over a very long period, while ensuring, in the very process of this work, our

indeed to build the Party organisation in anticipation only of outbreaks and street fighting, or only upon the "forward march of the drab everyday struggle". We must *always* conduct our everyday work and always be prepared for every situation, because very frequently it is almost impossible to foresee when a period of outbreak will give way to a period of calm. In the instances, however, when it is possible to do so, we could not turn this foresight to account for the purpose of reconstructing our organisation; for in an autocratic country these changes take place with astonishing rapidity, being sometimes connected with a single night raid by the tsarist janizaries. And the revolution itself must not by any means be regarded as a single act (as the Nadezhdins apparently imagine), but as a series of more or less powerful outbreaks rapidly alternating with periods of more or less complete calm. For that reason, the principal content of the activity of our Party organisation, the focus of this activity, should be work that is both possible and essential in the period of a most powerful outbreak as well as in the period of complete calm, namely, work of political agitation, connected throughout Russia, illuminating all aspects of life, and conducted among the broadest possible strata of the masses. But this work is *unthinkable* in present-day Russia without an All-Russian newspaper issued very frequently. The organisation, which will form round this newspaper, the organisation of its *collaborators* (in the broad sense of the word, i.e., all those working for it), will be ready *for everything*, from upholding the honour, the prestige, and the continuity of the Party in periods of acute revolutiona-

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Party's readiness to be at its post and fulfil its duty in every contingency whenever the march of events is accelerated—unless we succeed in doing this, we shall prove to be but miserable political adventurers. Only Nadezhdin, who began but yesterday to describe himself as a Social-Democrat, can forget that the aim of Social-Democracy is to transform radically the conditions of life of the whole of mankind and that for this reason it is not permissible for a Social-Democrat to be "perturbed" by the question of the duration of the work.

ry "depression" to preparing for, appointing the time for, and carrying out the *nation-wide armed uprising*.

Indeed, picture to yourselves a very ordinary occurrence in Russia—the total round-up of our comrades in one or several localities. In the absence of a *single*, common, regular activity that combines *all* the local organisations, such round-ups frequently result in the interruption of the work for many months. If, however, all the local organisations had one common activity, then, even in the event of a very serious round-up, two or three energetic persons could in the course of a few weeks establish contact between the common centre and new youth circles, which, as we know, spring up very quickly even now. And when the common activity, hampered by the arrests, is apparent to all, new circles will be able to come into being and make connections with the centre even more rapidly.

On the other hand, picture to yourselves a popular uprising. Probably everyone will now agree that we must think of this and prepare for it. But *how*? Surely the Central Committee cannot appoint agents to all localities for the purpose of preparing the uprising. Even if we had a Central Committee, it could achieve absolutely nothing by such appointments under present-day Russian conditions. But a network of agents\* that would form in the course of establishing and distributing the common newspaper would not have

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\* Alas, alas! Again I have let slip that awful word "agents", which jars so much on the democratic ears of the Martynovs! I wonder why this word did not offend the heroes of the seventies and yet offends the amateurs of the nineties? I like the word, because it clearly and trenchantly indicates the *common cause* to which all the agents bend their thoughts and actions, and if I had to replace this word by another, the only word I might select would be the word "collaborator", if it did not suggest a certain bookishness and vagueness. The thing we need is a military organisation of agents. However, the numerous Martynovs (particularly abroad), whose favourite pastime is "mutual grants of generalships to one another", may instead of saying "passport agent" prefer to say, "Chief of the Special Department for Supplying Revolutionaries with Passports", etc.



to "sit about and wait" for the call for an uprising, but could carry on the regular activity that would guarantee the highest probability of success in the event of an uprising. Such activity would strengthen our contacts with the broadest strata of the working masses and with all social strata that are discontented with the autocracy, which is of such importance for an uprising. Precisely such activity would serve to cultivate the ability to estimate correctly the general political situation and, consequently, the ability to select the proper moment for an uprising. Precisely such activity would train *all* local organisations to respond simultaneously to the same political questions, incidents, and events that agitate the whole of Russia and to react to such "incidents" in the most vigorous, uniform, and expedient manner possible; for an uprising is in essence the most vigorous, most uniform, and most expedient "answer" of the entire people to the government. Lastly, it is precisely such activity that would train all revolutionary organisations throughout Russia to maintain the most continuous, and at the same time the most secret, contacts with one another, thus creating *real* Party unity; for without such contacts it will be impossible collectively to discuss the plan for the uprising and to take the necessary preparatory measures on the eve, measures that must be kept in the strictest secrecy.

In a word, the "plan for an All-Russian political newspaper", far from representing the fruits of the labour of armchair workers, infected with dogmatism and bookishness (as it seemed to those who gave but little thought to it), is the most practical plan for immediate and all-round preparation of the uprising, with, at the same time, no loss of sight for a moment of the pressing day-to-day work.

## Conclusion

The history of Russian Social-Democracy can be distinctly divided into three periods:

The first period embraces about ten years, approximately from 1884 to 1894. This was the period of the rise and consolidation of the theory and programme of Social-Democracy. The adherents of the new trend in Russia were very few in number. Social-Democracy existed without a working-class movement, and as a political party it was at the embryonic stage of development.

The second period embraces three or four years—1894-98. In this period Social-Democracy appeared on the scene as a social movement, as the upsurge of the masses of the people, as a political party. This is the period of its childhood and adolescence. The intelligentsia was fired with a vast and general zeal for struggle against Narodism and for going among the workers; the workers displayed a general enthusiasm for strike action. The movement made enormous strides. The majority of the leaders were young people who had not reached "the age of thirty-five", which to Mr. N. Mikhailovsky appeared to be a sort of natural border-line. Owing to their youth, they proved to be untrained for practical work and they left the scene with astonishing rapidity. But in the majority of cases the scope of their activity was very wide. Many of them had begun their revolutionary thinking as adherents of Narodnaya Volya. Nearly all had in their early youth enthusiastically worshipped the terrorist heroes. It required a struggle to abandon the captivating impressions of those heroic traditions, and the struggle was accompanied by the breaking off of personal relations with people who were determined to remain loyal to the Narodnaya Volya and for whom the young Social-Democrats had profound respect. The struggle compelled the youthful leaders to educate themselves, to read illegal literature of every trend, and to study closely the questions of legal Narodism. Trained in this struggle, Social-Democrats went into the working-class movement without "for a moment" forgetting either the theory of Marxism, which brightly illumined their path, or the task of overthrowing the autocracy. The formation of the Party in the spring of

1898\* was the most striking and at the same time the *last* act of the Social-Democrats of this period.

The third period, as we have seen, was prepared in 1897 and it definitely cut off the second period in 1898 (1898-?). This was a period of disunity, dissolution, and vacillation. During adolescence a youth's voice breaks. And so, in this period, the voice of Russian Social-Democracy began to break, to strike a false note—on the one hand, in the writings of Messrs. Struve and Prokopovich, of Bulgakov and Berdyaev, and on the other, in those of V. I.—n and R. M., of B. Krichevsky and Martynov. But it was only the leaders who wandered about separately and drew back; the movement itself continued to grow, and it advanced with enormous strides. The proletarian struggle spread to new strata of the workers and extended to the whole of Russia, at the same time indirectly stimulating the revival of the democratic spirit among the students and among other sections of the population. The political consciousness of the leaders, however, capitulated before the breadth and power of the spontaneous upsurge; among the Social-Democrats, another type had become dominant—the type of functionaries, trained almost exclusively on “legal Marxist” literature, which proved to be all the more inadequate the more the spontaneity of the masses demanded political consciousness on the part of the leaders. The leaders not only lagged behind in regard to theory (“freedom of criticism”) and practice (“primitiveness”), but they sought to justify their backwardness by all manner of high-flown arguments. Social-Democracy was degraded to the level of trade-unionism by the Brentano adherents in legal literature, and by the tail-enders in illegal literature. The *Credo* programme began to be put into operation, especially when the “primitive methods” of the Social Democrats caused a revival of revolutionary non-Social-Democratic tendencies.

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\* The reference is to the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. which was held in Minsk in March 1898.—*Ed.*

If the reader should feel critical that I have dealt at too great length with a certain *Rabocheye Dyelo*, I can say only that *Rabocheye Dyelo* acquired "historical" significance because it most notably reflected the "spirit" of this third period.\* It was not the consistent R. M., but the weathercock Krichevskys and Martynovs who were able properly to express the disunity and vacillation, the readiness to make concessions to "criticism", to "Economism", and to terrorism. Not the lofty contempt for practical work displayed by some worshipper of the "absolute" is characteristic of this period, but the combination of pettifogging practice and utter disregard for theory. It was not so much in the direct rejection of "grandiose phrases" that the heroes of this period engaged as in their vulgarisation. Scientific socialism ceased to be an integral revolutionary theory and became a hodgepodge "freely" diluted with the content of every new German textbook that appeared; the slogan "class struggle" did not impel to broader and more energetic activity, but served as a balm, since "the economic struggle is inseparably linked with the political struggle"; the idea of a party did not serve as a call for the creation of a militant organisation of revolutionaries, but was used to justify some sort of "revolutionary bureaucracy" and infantile playing at "democratic" forms.

When the third period will come to an end and the fourth (now heralded by many portents) will begin we do not know. We are passing from the sphere of history to the sphere of the present and, partly, of the future. But we firmly believe that the fourth period will lead to the consolidation of militant Marxism, that Russian Social-Democra-

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\* I could also reply with the German proverb: *Den Sack schlägt man, den Esel meint man* (you beat the sack, but you mean the donkey). Not *Rabocheye Dyelo* alone, but also the broad mass of practical workers and theoreticians was carried away by the "criticism" *à la mode*, becoming confused in regard to the question of spontaneity and lapsing from the Social-Democratic to the trade-unionist conception of our political and organisational tasks.

cy will emerge from the crisis in the full flower of manhood, that the opportunist rearguard will be "replaced" by the genuine vanguard of the most revolutionary class.

In the sense of calling for such a "replacement" and by way of summing up what has been expounded above, we may meet the question, What is to be done? with the brief reply:

Put an End to the Third Period.

Written between the  
autumn of 1901 and  
February 1902

*Collected Works*, Vol. 5,  
pp. 352-55, 368-73, 498-  
520

## The Proletariat and the Peasantry

The Congress of the Peasant Union now in session in Moscow once again raises the vital question of the attitude of Social-Democrats to the peasant movement. It has always been a vital question for Russian Marxists when determining their programme and tactics. In the very first draft Programme of the Russian Social-Democrats, printed abroad in 1884 by the Emancipation of Labour group, most serious attention was devoted to the peasant question.

Since then there has not been a single major Marxist work dealing with general questions, or a single Social-Democratic periodical, which has not repeated or developed Marxist views and slogans, or applied them to particular cases.

Today the question of the peasant movement has become vital not only in the theoretical but also in the most direct practical sense. We now have to transform our general slogans into direct appeals by the revolutionary proletariat to the revolutionary peasantry. The time has now come when the peasantry is coming forward as a conscious maker of a new way of life in Russia. And the course and outcome of the great Russian revolution depend in tremendous measure on the growth of the peasants' political consciousness.

What does the peasantry expect of the revolution? What can the revolution give the peasantry? Anyone active in the political sphere, and especially every class-conscious worker who goes in for politics, not in the sense vulgarised

by bourgeois politicians, but in the best sense of the word, must answer these two questions.

The peasantry wants land and freedom. There can be no two opinions on this score. All class-conscious workers support the revolutionary peasantry with all their might. All class-conscious workers want and are fighting for the peasantry to receive all the land and full freedom. "All the land" means not putting up with any partial concessions and hand-outs; it means reckoning, not on a compromise between the peasantry and the landlords, but on abolition of landed estates. And the party of the class-conscious proletariat, the Social-Democrats, have most vigorously proclaimed this view: at its Third Congress held last May, the R.S.D.L.P. adopted a resolution directly declaring for support of the peasants' revolutionary demands, *including confiscation of all privately-owned estates*. This resolution clearly shows that the party of the class-conscious workers supports the peasants' demand for all the land. And in *this* respect the content of the resolution adopted at the conference of the other half of our Party fully coincides with that of the resolution passed by the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.\*

"Full freedom" means election of officials and other office-holders who administer public and state affairs. "Full freedom" means the complete abolition of a state administration that is not wholly and exclusively responsible to the people, that is not elected by, accountable to, and subject to recall by, the people. "Full freedom" means that it is not the people who should be subordinated to officials, but the officials who should be subordinated to the people.

Of course, not all peasants fighting for land and freedom are fully aware of what their struggle implies, and go so far as to demand a republic. But for all that, the democratic

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\* Lenin refers to the resolution adopted at the Menshevik conference in Geneva in April 1905.—Ed.

trend of the peasants' demands is beyond all doubt. Hence the peasantry can be certain that the proletariat will support these demands. The peasants must know that the red banner which has been raised in the towns is the banner of struggle for the immediate and vital demands, not only of the industrial and agricultural workers, but also of the millions and tens of millions of small tillers of the soil.

Survivals of serfdom in every possible shape and form are to this day a cruel burden on the whole mass of the peasantry, and the proletarians under their red banner have declared war on this burden.

But the red banner means more than proletarian support of the peasants' demands. It also means the independent demands of the proletariat. It means struggle, not only for land and freedom, but also against all exploitation of man by man, struggle against the poverty of the masses of the people, against the rule of capital. And it is here that we are faced with the second question: what can the revolution give the peasantry? Many sincere friends of the peasants (the Socialist-Revolutionaries, for instance, among them) ignore this question, do not realise its importance. They think it is sufficient to raise and settle the question of what the peasants want, to get the answer: land and freedom. This is a great mistake. Full freedom, election of all officials all the way to the head of the state, will not do away with the rule of capital, will not abolish the wealth of the few and the poverty of the masses. Complete abolition of private landownership, too, will not do away either with the rule of capital or with the poverty of the masses. Even on land belonging to the whole nation, only those with capital of their own, only those who have the implements, livestock, machines, stocks of seed, money in general, etc., will be able to farm independently. As for those who have nothing but their hands to work with, they will inevitably remain slaves of capital even in a democratic republic, even when the land belongs to the whole nation. The idea that "socialisation" of land can be effected without socialisation of



capital, the idea that equalised land tenure\* is possible while capital and commodity economy exist, is a delusion. In nearly all countries of Europe, socialism has experienced periods when this or some similar delusions have been prevalent. The experience of working-class struggle in all countries has shown in practice how dangerous such an error is, and today the socialist proletarians of Europe and America have completely rid themselves of it.

Thus the red banner of the class-conscious workers means, first, that we support with all our might the peasants' struggle for full freedom and all the land; secondly, it means that we do not stop at this, but go on further. We are waging, besides the struggle for freedom and land, a fight for socialism. The fight for socialism is a fight against the rule of capital. It is being carried on first and foremost by the wage-workers, who are directly and wholly dependent on capital. As for the small farmers, some of them own capital themselves, and often themselves exploit workers. Hence not all small peasants join the ranks of fighters for socialism; only those do so who resolutely and consciously side with the workers against capital, with public property against private property.

That is why the Social-Democrats say they are fighting together with the entire peasantry against the landlords and officials, besides which they—the town and village proletarians together—are fighting against capital. The struggle for land and freedom is a democratic struggle. The struggle to abolish the rule of capital is a socialist struggle.

Let us, then, send our warm greetings to the Peasant Union, which has decided to stand together and fight staunchly, selflessly and unswervingly for full freedom and for all the land. These peasants are true democrats. We must explain to them patiently and steadily where their views

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\* Lenin refers to the slogans of "socialisation of land" and "equalised land tenure" put forward by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. —Ed.

on the tasks of democracy and socialism are wrong, regarding them as allies with whom we are united by the great common struggle. These peasants are truly revolutionary democrats with whom we must and shall carry on the fight for the complete victory of the present revolution. We are fully in sympathy with the plan to call a general strike and the decision to rise together the next time, with the town workers and all the peasant poor acting in unison. All class-conscious workers will make every effort to help carry out this plan. Yet no alliance, even with the most honest and determined revolutionary democrats, will ever make the proletarians forget their still greater and more important goal, the fight for socialism, for the complete abolition of the rule of capital, for the emancipation of all working people from every kind of exploitation. Forward, workers and peasants, in the common struggle for land and freedom! Forward, proletarians, united by international Social-Democracy, in the fight for socialism!

*Novaya Zhizn* No. 11,  
November 12, 1905

*Collected Works*, Vol. 10,  
pp. 40-43

## **Certain Features of the Historical Development of Marxism**

Our doctrine—said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical statement stresses with remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is very often lost sight of. And by losing sight of it, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, distorted and lifeless; we deprive it of its life blood; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine of historical development, all-embracing and full of contradictions; we undermine its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history.

Indeed, in our time, among those interested in the fate of Marxism in Russia, we very frequently meet with people who lose sight of just this aspect of Marxism. Yet, it must be clear to everybody that in recent years Russia has undergone changes so abrupt as to alter the situation with unusual rapidity and unusual force—the social and political situation which in a most direct and immediate manner determines the conditions for action, and, hence, its aims. I am not referring, of course, to general and fundamental aims, which do not change with turns of history if the fundamental relation between classes remains unchanged. It is perfectly obvious that this general trend of economic (and not only economic) evolution in Russia, like the fundamental relation between the various classes of Russian society, has not changed during, say, the last six years.

But the aims of immediate and direct action changed very sharply during this period, just as the actual social

and political situation changed, and *consequently*, since Marxism is a living doctrine, *various* aspects of it *were bound* to become prominent.

In order to make this idea clear, let us cast a glance at the change in the actual social and political situation over the past six years. We immediately differentiate two three-year periods: one ending roughly with the summer of 1907, and the other with the summer of 1910. The first three-year period, regarded from the purely theoretical standpoint, is distinguished by rapid changes in the fundamental features of the state system in Russia; the course of these changes, moreover, was very uneven and the oscillations in both directions were of considerable amplitude. The social and economic basis of these changes in the "superstructure" was the action of *all* classes of Russian society in *the most diverse* fields (activity inside and outside the Duma, the press, unions, meetings, and so forth), action so open and impressive and on a mass scale such as is rarely to be observed in history.

The second three-year period, on the contrary, is distinguished—we repeat that we confine ourselves to the purely theoretical "sociological" standpoint—by an evolution so slow that it almost amounted to stagnation. There were no changes of any importance to be observed in the state system. There were hardly any open and diversified actions by the *classes* in the majority of the "arenas" in which these actions had developed in the preceding period.

The similarity between the two periods is that Russia underwent capitalist evolution in both of them. The contradiction between this economic evolution and the existence of a number of feudal and medieval institutions still remained and was not stifled, but rather aggravated, by the fact that certain institutions assumed a partially bourgeois character.

The difference between the two periods is that in the first the question of exactly what form the above-mentioned

rapid and uneven changes would take was the dominant, history-making issue. The content of these changes was bound to be bourgeois owing to the capitalist character of Russia's evolution; but there are different kinds of bourgeoisie. The middle and big bourgeoisie, which professes a more or less moderate liberalism, was, owing to its very class position, afraid of abrupt changes and strove for the retention of large remnants of the old institutions both in the agrarian system and in the political "superstructure". The rural petty bourgeoisie, interwoven as it is with the peasants who live "solely by the labour of their hands", was bound to strive for bourgeois reforms of a *different* kind, reforms that would leave far less room for medieval survivals. The wage-workers, inasmuch as they consciously realised what was going on around them, were bound to work out for themselves a definite attitude towards this clash of two distinct tendencies. Both tendencies remained within the framework of the bourgeois system, determining entirely different forms of that system, entirely different rates of its development, different degrees of its progressive influence.

Thus, the first period necessarily brought to the fore—and not by chance—those problems of Marxism that are usually referred to as problems of tactics. Nothing is more erroneous than the opinion that the disputes and differences over these questions were disputes among "intellectuals", "a struggle for influence over the immature proletariat", an expression of the "adaptation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat", as *Uekhi* followers of various hues think. On the contrary, it was precisely because this class had reached maturity that it could not remain indifferent to the clash of the two different tendencies in Russia's bourgeois development, and the ideologists of this class could not avoid providing theoretical formulations corresponding (directly or indirectly, in direct or reverse reflection) to these different tendencies.

In the second period the clash between the different tendencies of bourgeois development in Russia was *not*

on the order of the day, because *both* these tendencies had been crushed by the "diehards", forced back, driven inwards and, for the time being, stifled. The medieval diehards\* not only occupied the foreground but also inspired the broadest sections of bourgeois society with the sentiments propagated by *Uekhi*, with a spirit of dejection and recantation. It was not the collision between two methods of reforming the old order that appeared on the surface, but a loss of faith in reforms of any kind, a spirit of "meekness" and "repentance", an enthusiasm for anti-social doctrines, a vogue of mysticism, and so on.

This astonishingly abrupt change was neither accidental nor the result of "external" pressure alone. The preceding period had so profoundly stirred up sections of the population who for generations and centuries had stood aloof from, and had been strangers to, political issues that it was natural and inevitable that there should emerge "a revaluation of all values", a new study of fundamental problems, a new interest in theory, in elementals, in the ABC of politics. The millions who were suddenly awakened from their long sleep and confronted with extremely important problems could not long remain on this level. They could not continue without a respite, without a return to elementary questions, without a new training which would help them "digest" lessons of unparalleled richness and make it possible for incomparably wider masses again to march forward, but now far more firmly, more consciously, more confidently and more steadfastly.

The dialectics of historical development was such that in the first period it was the attainment of immediate reforms in every sphere of the country's life that was on the order of the day. In the second period it was the critical study of experience, its assimilation by wider sections, its pe-

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\* *Diehards*—proprietors of large estates, representatives of extreme political reaction, who supported the autocracy and feudalism in tsarist Russia and held large numbers of peasants in semi-feudal bondage.—Ed.

netration, so to speak, into the subsoil, into the backward ranks of the various classes.

It is precisely because Marxism is not a lifeless dogma, not a completed, ready-made, immutable doctrine, but a living guide to action, that it was bound to reflect the astonishingly abrupt change in the conditions of social life. That change was reflected in profound disintegration and disunity, in every manner of vacillation, in short, in a very serious *internal* crisis of Marxism. Resolute resistance to this disintegration, a resolute and persistent struggle to uphold the *fundamentals* of Marxism, was again placed on the order of the day. In the preceding period, extremely wide sections of the classes that cannot avoid Marxism in formulating their aims had assimilated that doctrine in an extremely one-sided and mutilated fashion. They had learnt by rote certain "slogans", certain answers to tactical questions, *without having understood* the Marxist criteria for these answers. The "reevaluation of all values" in the various spheres of social life led to a "revision" of the most abstract and general philosophical fundamentals of Marxism. The influence of bourgeois philosophy in its diverse idealist shades found expression in the Machist epidemic that broke out among the Marxists. The repetition of "slogans" learnt by rote but not understood and not thought out led to the widespread prevalence of empty phrase-mongering. The practical expression of this were such absolutely un-Marxist, petty-bourgeois trends as frank or shame-faced "otzovism", or the recognition of otzovism as a "legal shade" of Marxism.

On the other hand, the spirit of the magazine *Vekhi*, the spirit of renunciation which had taken possession of very wide sections of the bourgeoisie, also permeated the trend wishing to confine Marxist theory and practice to "moderate and careful"\* channels. All that remained of

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\* Expression quoted from Saltykov-Shchedrin's work "Amidst Moderation and Carefulness" implying political time-serving, lack of principle and sycophancy before those who have power.—Ed.

Marxism here was the phraseology used to clothe arguments about "hierarchy", "hegemony" and so forth, that were thoroughly permeated with the spirit of liberalism.

The purpose of this article is not to examine these arguments. A mere reference to them is sufficient to illustrate what has been said above regarding the depth of the crisis through which Marxism is passing and its connection with the whole social and economic situation in the present period. The questions raised by this crisis cannot be brushed aside. Nothing can be more pernicious or unprincipled than attempts to dismiss them by phrase-mongering. Nothing is more important than to rally *all* Marxists who have realised the profundity of the crisis and the necessity of combating it, for defence of the theoretical basis of Marxism and its fundamental propositions, that are being distorted from diametrically opposite sides by the spread of bourgeois influence to the various "fellow-travellers" of Marxism.

The first three years awakened wide sections to a conscious participation in social life, sections that in many cases are now for the first time beginning to acquaint themselves with Marxism in real earnest. The bourgeois press is creating far more fallacious ideas on this score than ever before, and is spreading them more widely. Under these circumstances disintegration in the Marxist ranks is particularly dangerous. Therefore, to understand the reasons for the inevitability of this disintegration at the present time and to close their ranks for consistent struggle against this disintegration is, in the most direct and precise meaning of the term, the task of the day for Marxists.



## Theses on the National Question\*

1. The article of our programme (on the self-determination of nations) cannot be interpreted to mean anything but *political* self-determination, i.e., the right to secede and form a separate state.

2. This article in the Social-Democratic programme is *absolutely* essential to the Social-Democrats of Russia

a) for the sake of the basic principles of democracy in general;

b) also because there are, within the frontiers of Russia and, *what is more, in her frontier areas*, a number of nations with sharply distinctive economic, social and other conditions; furthermore, these nations (like all the nations of Russia except the Great Russians) are unbelievably oppressed by the tsarist monarchy;

c) lastly, also in view of the fact that throughout Eastern Europe (Austria and the Balkans) and in Asia—i.e., in countries bordering on Russia—the bourgeois-democratic reform of the state that has everywhere else in the world led, in varying degree, to the creation of independent national states or states with the closest, interrelated national composition, has either not been consummated or has only just begun;

d) at the present moment Russia is a country whose state system is more backward and reactionary than that of

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\* These theses were written by Lenin for his lectures on the national question delivered in July 1913 in Zurich, Lausanne, Geneva and Berne.—Ed.

any of the contiguous countries, beginning—in the West—with Austria where the fundamentals of political liberty and a constitutional regime were consolidated in 1867, and where universal franchise has now been introduced, and ending—in the East—with republican China. In all their propaganda, therefore, the Social-Democrats of Russia must insist on the right of all nationalities to form separate states or to choose freely the state of which they wish to form part.

3. The Social-Democratic Party's recognition of the right of all nationalities to self-determination requires of Social-Democrats that they should

a) be unconditionally hostile to the use of force in any form whatsoever by the dominant nation (or the nation which constitutes the majority of the population) in respect of a nation that wishes to secede politically;

b) demand the settlement of the question of such secession only on the basis of a universal, direct and equal vote of the population of the given territory by secret ballot;

c) conduct an implacable struggle against both the Black-Hundred-Octobrist and the liberal-bourgeois (Progressist, Cadet, etc.) parties on every occasion when they defend or sanction national oppression in general or the denial of the right of nations to self-determination in particular.

4. The Social-Democratic Party's recognition of the right of all nationalities to self-determination most certainly does not mean that Social-Democrats reject an independent appraisal of the advisability of the state secession of any nation in each separate case. Social-Democracy should, on the contrary, give its independent appraisal taking into consideration the conditions of capitalist development and the oppression of the proletarians of various nations by the united bourgeoisie of all nationalities, as well as the general tasks of democracy, first of all and most of all the interests of the proletarian class struggle for socialism.

From this point of view the following circumstance must be given special attention. There are two nations in Russia that are more civilised and more isolated by virtue of a

number of historical and social conditions and that could most easily and most "naturally" put into effect their right to secession. They are the peoples of Finland and Poland. The experience of the Revolution of 1905 has shown that even in these two nations the ruling classes, the landowners and bourgeoisie, reject the revolutionary struggle for liberty and seek a *rapprochement* with the ruling classes of Russia and with the tsarist monarchy *because of their fear* of the revolutionary proletariat of Finland and Poland.

Social-Democracy, therefore, must give most emphatic warning to the proletariat and other working people of all nationalities against direct deception by the nationalistic slogans of "their own" bourgeoisie, who with their saccharine or fiery speeches about "our native land" try to *divide* the proletariat and *divert its attention* from their bourgeois intrigues while they enter into an economic and political alliance with the bourgeoisie of other nations and with the tsarist monarchy.

The proletariat cannot pursue its struggle for socialism and defend its everyday economic interests without the closest and fullest alliance of the workers of all nations in all working-class organisations without exception.

The proletariat cannot achieve freedom other than by revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy and its replacement by a democratic republic. The tsarist monarchy *precludes* liberty and equal rights for nationalities, and is, furthermore, the bulwark of barbarity, brutality and reaction in both Europe and Asia. This monarchy can be overthrown only by the united proletariat of all the nations of Russia, which is giving the lead to consistently democratic elements capable of revolutionary struggle from among the working masses of all nations.

It follows, therefore, that workers who place political unity with "their own" bourgeoisie above complete unity with the proletariat of all nations, are acting against their own interests, against the interests of socialism and against the interests of democracy.

5. Social-Democrats, in upholding a consistently democratic state system, demand unconditional equality for all nationalities and struggle against absolutely all privileges for one or several nationalities.

In particular, Social-Democrats reject a "state" language. It is particularly superfluous in Russia because more than seven-tenths of the population of Russia belong to related Slav nationalities who, given a free school and a free state, could easily achieve intercourse by virtue of the demands of the economic turnover without any "state" privileges for any one language.

Social-Democrats demand the abolition of the old administrative divisions of Russia established by the feudal landowners and the civil servants of the autocratic feudal state and their replacement by divisions based on the requirements of present-day economic life and in accordance, as far as possible, with the national composition of the population.

All areas of the state that are distinguished by social peculiarities or by the national composition of the population, must enjoy wide self-government and autonomy, with institutions organised on the basis of universal, equal and secret voting.

6. Social-Democrats demand the promulgation of a law, operative throughout the state, protecting the rights of every national minority in no matter what part of the state. This law should declare inoperative any measure by means of which the national majority might attempt to establish privileges for itself or restrict the rights of a national minority (in the sphere of education, in the use of any specific language, in budget affairs, etc.), and forbid the implementation of any such measure by making it a punishable offence.

7. The Social-Democratic attitude to the slogan of "cultural-national" (or simply "national") "autonomy" or to plans for its implementation is a negative one, since this slogan (1) undoubtedly contradicts the internationalism of the class struggle of the proletariat, (2) makes it easier for the proletariat and the masses of working people to be drawn

into the sphere of influence of bourgeois nationalism, and (3) is capable of distracting attention from the task of the consistent democratic transformation of the state as a whole, which transformation alone can ensure (to the extent that this can, in general, be ensured under capitalism) peace between nationalities.

In view of the special acuteness of the question of cultural-national autonomy among Social-Democrats, we give some explanation of the situation.

a) It is impermissible, from the standpoint of Social-Democracy, to issue the slogan of *national* culture either directly or indirectly. The slogan is incorrect because already under capitalism, all economic, political and spiritual life is becoming more and more international. Socialism will make it completely international. International culture, which is now already being systematically created by the proletariat of all countries, does not absorb "national culture" (no matter of what national group) as a whole, but accepts from *each* national culture *exclusively* those of its elements that are consistently democratic and socialist.

b) Probably the one example of an approximation, even though it is a timid one, to the slogan of national culture in Social-Democratic programmes is Article 3 of the Brünn Programme of the Austrian Social-Democrats. This Article 3 reads: "All self-governing regions of one and the same nation form a single national alliance that has complete autonomy in deciding its national affairs."

This is a compromise slogan since it does not contain a shadow of extra-territorial (personal) national autonomy. But this slogan, too, is erroneous and harmful, for it is no business of the Social-Democrats of Russia to unite into one nation the Germans in Lodz, Riga, St. Petersburg and Saratov. Our business is to struggle for full democracy and the annulment of *all* national privileges and to unite the German workers in Russia with the workers of all other nations in upholding and developing the international culture of socialism.

Still more erroneous is the slogan of extra-territorial (personal) national autonomy with the setting up (according to a plan drawn up by the consistent supporters of this slogan) of national parliaments and national state secretaries (Otto Bauer and Karl Renner). Such institutions contradict the economic conditions of the capitalist countries, they have not been tested in any of the world's democratic states and are the opportunist dream of people who despair of setting up consistent democratic institutions and are seeking salvation from the national squabbles of the bourgeoisie in the artificial isolation of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie of each nation on a number of ("cultural") questions.

Circumstances occasionally compel Social-Democrats to submit for a time to some sort of compromise decisions, but from other countries we must borrow not compromise decisions, but consistently Social-Democratic decisions. It would be particularly unwise to adopt the unhappy Austrian compromise decision today, when it has been a complete failure in Austria and has led to the separatism and secession of the Czech Social-Democrats.

c) The history of the "cultural-national autonomy" slogan in Russia shows that it has been adopted by *all* Jewish bourgeois parties and *only* by Jewish bourgeois parties; and that they have been uncritically followed by the Bund, which has inconsistently rejected the national-Jewish parliament (sejm) and national-Jewish state secretaries. Incidentally, even those European Social-Democrats who accede to or defend the compromise slogan of cultural-national autonomy, admit that the slogan is quite unrealisable for the Jews (Otto Bauer and Karl Kautsky). "The Jews in Galicia and Russia are more of a caste than a nation, and attempts to constitute Jewry as a nation are attempts at preserving a caste" (Karl Kautsky).

d) In civilised countries we observe a fairly full (relatively) approximation to national peace under capitalism *only* in conditions of the *maximum* implementation of democ-

racy throughout the state system and administration (Switzerland). The slogans of consistent democracy (the republic, a militia, civil servants elected by the people, etc.) unite the proletariat and the working people, and, in general, all progressive elements in each nation in the name of the struggle for conditions that preclude even the slightest national privilege—while the slogan of “cultural-national autonomy” preaches the isolation of nations in educational affairs (or “cultural” affairs, in general), an isolation that is quite compatible with the retention of the grounds for all (including national) privileges.

The slogans of consistent democracy *unite* in a single whole the proletariat and the advanced democrats of all nations (elements that demand not isolation but the uniting of democratic elements of the nations in all matters, including educational affairs), while the slogan of cultural-national autonomy *divides* the proletariat of the different nations and links it up with the reactionary and bourgeois elements of the separate nations.

The slogans of consistent democracy are implacably hostile to the reactionaries and to the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of all nations, while the slogan of cultural-national autonomy is quite acceptable to the reactionaries and counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie of some nations.

8. The sum-total of economic and political conditions in Russia therefore demands that Social-Democracy should *unite* unconditionally workers of all nationalities in *all* proletarian organisations without exception (political, trade union, co-operative, educational, etc., etc.). The Party should not be federative in structure and should not form national Social-Democratic groups but should unite the proletarians of all nations in the given locality, conduct propaganda and agitation in *all* the languages of the local proletariat, promote the common struggle of the workers of all nations against every kind of national privilege and should recognise the autonomy of local and regional Party organisations.

9. More than ten years' experience gained by the R.S.D.L.P. confirms the correctness of the above thesis. The Party was founded in 1898 as a party of all Russia, that is, a party of the proletariat of all the nationalities of Russia. The Party remained "Russian" when the Bund seceded in 1903, after the Party Congress had rejected the demand to consider the Bund the *only* representative of the Jewish proletariat. In 1906 and 1907 events showed convincingly that there were no grounds for this demand, a large number of Jewish proletarians continued to co-operate in the common Social-Democratic work in many local organisations, and the Bund re-entered the Party. The Stockholm Congress (1906) brought into the Party the Polish and Latvian Social-Democrats, who favoured *territorial* autonomy, and the Congress, furthermore, did *not* accept the principle of federation and demanded unity of Social-Democrats of all nationalities in each locality. This principle has been in operation in the Caucasus for many years, it is in operation in Warsaw (Polish workers and Russian soldiers), in Vilna (Polish, Lettish, Jewish and Lithuanian workers) and in Riga, and in the three last-named places it has been implemented *against* the separatist Bund. In December 1908, the R.S.D.L.P., through its conference, adopted a special resolution confirming the demand for the *unity* of workers of all nationalities, *on a principle other than* federation. The splitting activities of the Bund separatists in not fulfilling the Party decision led to the collapse of all that "federation of the worst type" and brought about the *rapprochement* of the Bund and the Czech separatists and vice versa (see Kosovsky in *Nasha Zarya* and the organ of the Czech separatists, *Der čechoslawische Sozialdemokrat* No. 3, 1913, on Kosovsky), and, lastly, at the August (1912) Conference of the liquidators it led to an *undercover* attempt by the Bund separatists and liquidators and some of the Caucasian liquidators to insert "cultural-national autonomy" into the Party programme *without any defence of its substance!*

Revolutionary worker Social-Democrats in Poland, in the



Latvian Area and in the Caucasus still stand for territorial autonomy and the *unity* of worker Social-Democrats of *all* nations. The Bund-liquidator secession and the alliance of the Bund with *non*-Social-Democrats in Warsaw place the *entire* national question, both in its theoretical aspect and in the matter of Party structure, *on the order of the day* for all Social-Democrats.

Compromise decisions have been broken by the very people who introduced them against the will of the Party, and the demand for the unity of worker Social-Democrats of all nationalities is being made more loudly than ever.

10. The crudely militant and Black-Hundred-type nationalism of the tsarist monarchy, and also the revival of *bourgeois* nationalism—Great-Russian (Mr. Struve, *Russkaya Molva*, the Progressists, etc.), the Ukrainian, and Polish (the anti-Semitism of Narodowa “Demokracja”), and Georgian and Armenian, etc.—all this makes it particularly urgent for Social-Democratic organisations in all parts of Russia to devote greater attention than before to the national question and to work out consistently Marxist decisions on this subject in the spirit of consistent internationalism and unity of proletarians of all nations.

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α) The slogan of national culture is incorrect and expresses only the limited bourgeois understanding of the national question. International culture.

β) The perpetuating of national divisions and the promoting of refined nationalism—unification, *rapprochement*, the mingling of nations and the expression of the principles of a *different*, international culture.

γ) The despair of the petty bourgeois (hopeless struggle against national bickering) and the fear of radical-democratic reforms and the socialist movement—only radical-democratic reforms can establish national peace in capitalist states

and only socialism is able to terminate national bickering.

δ) National curias in educational affairs.\*

ε) The Jews.

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before 26 (July 9),  
1913

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\* This refers to the segregation of the schools according to nationality planned by the champions of "cultural-national autonomy."—*Ed.*

## **On the National Pride of the Great Russians**

What a lot of talk, argument and vociferation there is nowadays about nationality and the fatherland! Liberal and radical cabinet ministers in Britain, a host of "forward-looking" journalists in France (who have proved in full agreement with their reactionary colleagues), and a swarm of official Cadet and progressive scribblers in Russia (including several Narodniks and "Marxists")—all have effusive praise for the liberty and independence of their respective countries, the grandeur of the principle of national independence. Here one cannot tell where the venal eulogist of the butcher Nicholas Romanov or of the brutal oppressors of Negroes and Indians ends, and where the common philistine, who from sheer stupidity or spinelessness drifts with the stream, begins. Nor is that distinction important. We see before us an extensive and very deep ideological trend, whose origins are closely interwoven with the interests of the landowners and the capitalists of the dominant nations. Scores and hundreds of millions are being spent every year for the propaganda of ideas advantageous to those classes: it is a pretty big mill-race that takes its waters from all sources—from Menshikov, a chauvinist by conviction, to chauvinists for reason of opportunism or spinelessness, such as Plekhanov and Maslov, Rubanovich and Smirnov, Kropotkin and Burtsev.

Let us, Great-Russian Social-Democrats, also try to define our attitude to this ideological trend. It would be unseemly for us, representatives of a dominant nation in the far east

of Europe and a goodly part of Asia, to forget the immense significance of the national question—especially in a country which has been rightly called the “prison of the peoples”, and particularly at a time when, in the far east of Europe and in Asia, capitalism is awakening to life and self-consciousness a number of “new” nations, large and small; at a moment when the tsarist monarchy has called up millions of Great Russians and non-Russians, so as to “solve” a number of national problems in accordance with the interests of the Council of the United Nobility and of the Guchkovs, Krestovnikovs, Dolgorukovs, Kutlers and Rodichevs.

Is a sense of national pride alien to us, Great-Russian class-conscious proletarians? Certainly not! We love our language and our country, and we are doing our very utmost to raise *her* toiling masses (i.e., nine-tenths of *her* population) to the level of a democratic and social consciousness. To us it is most painful to see and feel the outrages, the oppression and the humiliation our fair country suffers at the hands of the tsar’s butchers, the nobles and the capitalists. We take pride in the resistance to these outrages put up from our midst, from the Great Russians; in *that* midst having produced Radishchev, the Decembrists and the revolutionary commoners of the seventies; in the Great-Russian working class having created, in 1905, a mighty revolutionary party of the masses; and in the Great-Russian peasantry having begun to turn towards democracy and set about overthrowing the clergy and the landed proprietors.

We remember that Chernyshevsky, the Great-Russian democrat, who dedicated his life to the cause of revolution, said half a century ago: “A wretched nation, a nation of slaves, from top to bottom—all slaves.”\* The overt and covert Great-Russian slaves (slaves with regard to the tsarist monarchy) do not like to recall these words. Yet, in our opinion, these were words of genuine love for our country,

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\* Said by Volgin, a character in Chernyshevsky’s novel *Prologue*, whose prototype was the author himself.—Ed.

a love distressed by the absence of a revolutionary spirit in the masses of the Great-Russian people. There was none of that spirit at the time. There is little of it now, but it already exists. We are full of national pride because the Great-Russian nation, *too*, has created a revolutionary class, because it, *too*, has proved capable of providing mankind with great models of the struggle for freedom and socialism, and not only with great pogroms, rows of gallows, dungeons, great famines and great servility to priests, tsars, landowners and capitalists.

We are full of a sense of national pride, and for that very reason we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past (when the landed nobility led the peasants into war to stifle the freedom of Hungary, Poland, Persia and China), and our slavish present, when these selfsame landed proprietors, aided by the capitalists, are leading us into a war in order to throttle Poland and the Ukraine, crush the democratic movement in Persia and China, and strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys and Purishkeviches, who are a disgrace to our Great-Russian national dignity. Nobody is to be blamed for being born a slave; but a slave who not only eschews a striving for freedom but justifies and eulogises his slavery (e.g., calls the throttling of Poland and the Ukraine, etc., a "defence of the fatherland" of the Great Russians)—such a slave is a lickspittle and a boor, who arouses a legitimate feeling of indignation, contempt, and loathing.

"No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations,"\* said Marx and Engels, the greatest representatives of consistent nineteenth century democracy, who became the teachers of the revolutionary proletariat. And, full of a sense of national pride, we Great-Russian workers want, come what may, a free and independent, a democratic, republican and proud

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\* See Frederick Engels, *Emigré Literature* I. "The Polish Proclamation": "A people that oppresses other peoples cannot emancipate itself. The power it needs for subjugating another people in the end always turns against it." (Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 18, S. 527).—Ed.

Great Russia, one that will base its relations with its neighbours on the human principle of equality, and not on the feudalist principle of privilege, which is so degrading to a great nation. Just because we want that, we say: it is impossible, in the twentieth century and in Europe (even in the far east of Europe), to "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by using every revolutionary means to combat the monarchy, the landowners and the capitalists of one's *own* fatherland, i.e., the *worst* enemies of our country. We say that the Great Russians cannot "defend the fatherland" otherwise than by desiring the defeat of tsarism in any war, this as the lesser evil to nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Great Russia. For tsarism not only oppresses those nine-tenths economically and politically, but also demoralises, degrades, dishonours and prostitutes them by teaching them to oppress other nations and to cover up this shame with hypocritical and quasi-patriotic phrases.

The objection may be advanced that, besides tsarism and under its wing, another historical force has arisen and become strong, viz., Great-Russian capitalism, which is carrying on progressive work by economically centralising and welding together vast regions. This objection, however, does not excuse, but on the contrary still more condemns our socialist-chauvinists, who should be called tsarist-Purishkevich socialists\* (just as Marx called the Lassalleans Royal-Prussian socialists)\*\*. Let us even assume that history will decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-nation capitalism, and against the hundred and one small nations. That is not impossible, for the entire history of capital is one of violence

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\* Meaning the socialists who in the First World War adopted a chauvinist position and supported the aggressive and great-power policies of the tsar and monarchist reactionaries one of whose leaders was Purishkevich.—*Ed.*

\*\* The name applied by Marx and Engels to the Lassalleans who conducted negotiations with Bismarck trying to obtain subsidies from the Prussian royal government for organising "workers' producers' associations".—*Ed.*

and plunder, blood and corruption. We do not advocate preserving small nations at all costs; *other conditions being equal*, we are decidedly for centralisation and are opposed to the petty-bourgeois ideal of federal relationships. Even if our assumption were true, however, it is, firstly, not our business, or that of democrats (let alone of socialists), to help Romanov-Bobrinsky-Purishkevich throttle the Ukraine, etc. In his own Junker fashion, Bismarck accomplished a progressive historical task, but he would be a fine "Marxist" indeed who, on such grounds, thought of justifying socialist support for Bismarck! Moreover, Bismarck promoted economic development by bringing together the disunited Germans, who were being oppressed by other nations. The economic prosperity and rapid development of Great Russia, however, require that the country be liberated from Great-Russian oppression of other nations—that is the difference that our admirers of the true-Russian would-be Bismarcks overlook.

Secondly, if history were to decide in favour of Great-Russian dominant-nation capitalism, it follows hence that the *socialist* role of the Great-Russian proletariat, as the principal driving force of the communist revolution engendered by capitalism, will be all the greater. The proletarian revolution calls for a prolonged education of the workers in the spirit of the *fullest* national equality and brotherhood. Consequently, the interests of the Great-Russian proletariat require that the masses be systematically educated to champion—most resolutely, consistently, boldly and in a revolutionary manner—complete equality and the right to self-determination for all the nations oppressed by the Great Russians. The interests of the Great Russians' national pride (understood, not in the slavish sense) coincide with the *socialist* interests of the Great-Russian (and all other) proletarians. Our model will always be Marx, who, after living in Britain for decades and becoming half-English, demanded freedom and national independence for Ireland in the interests of the socialist movement of the British workers.

In the second hypothetical case we have considered, our home-grown socialist-chauvinists, Plekhanov, etc., etc., will prove traitors, not only to their own country—a free and democratic Great Russia, but also to the proletarian brotherhood of all the nations of Russia, i.e., to the cause of socialism.

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# ***From Socialism and War***

## ***The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. Towards the War***

### **CHAPTER I**

#### **The Principles of Socialism and the War of 1914-1915**

##### **The Attitude of Socialists Towards Wars**

Socialists have always condemned wars between nations as barbarous and brutal. Our attitude towards war, however, is fundamentally different from that of the bourgeois pacifists (supporters and advocates of peace) and of the anarchists. We differ from the former in that we understand the inevitable connection between wars and the class struggle within a country; we understand that wars cannot be abolished unless classes are abolished and socialism is created; we also differ in that we regard civil wars, i.e., wars waged by an oppressed class against the oppressor class, by slaves against slave-holders, by serfs against landowners, and by wage-workers against the bourgeoisie, as fully legitimate, progressive and necessary. We Marxists differ from both pacifists and anarchists in that we deem it necessary to study each war historically (from the standpoint of Marx's dialectical materialism) and separately. There have been in the past numerous wars which, despite all the horrors, atrocities, distress and suffering that inevitably accompany all wars, were progressive, i.e., benefited the development of mankind by helping to destroy most harmful and reactionary institutions (e.g., an autocracy or serfdom) and the most barbarous despotisms in Europe (the Turkish and the Russian). That is why the features historically specific to the present war must come up for examination.

### **The Historical Types of Wars in Modern Times**

The Great French Revolution ushered in a new epoch in the history of mankind. From that time down to the Paris Commune, i.e., between 1789 and 1871, one type of war was of a bourgeois-progressive character, waged for national liberation. In other words, the overthrow of absolutism and feudalism, the undermining of these institutions, and the overthrow of alien oppression, formed the chief content and historical significance of such wars. These were therefore progressive wars; during *such* wars, all honest and revolutionary democrats, as well as all socialists, always wished success to that country (i.e., that bourgeoisie) which had helped to overthrow or undermine the most baneful foundations of feudalism, absolutism and the oppression of other nations. For example, the revolutionary wars waged by France contained an element of plunder and the conquest of foreign territory by the French, but this does not in the least alter the fundamental historical significance of those wars, which destroyed and shattered feudalism and absolutism in the whole of the old, self-owning Europe. In the Franco-Prussian war, Germany plundered France but this does not alter the fundamental historical significance of that war, which liberated tens of millions of German people from feudal disunity and from the oppression of two despots, the Russian tsar and Napoleon III.

### **The Difference Between Wars of Aggression and of Defence**

The period of 1789-1871 left behind it deep marks and revolutionary memories. There could be no development of the proletarian struggle for socialism prior to the overthrow of feudalism, absolutism and alien oppression. When, in speaking of the wars of *such* periods, socialists stressed the legitimacy of "defensive" wars, they always had these aims in mind, namely revolution against medievalism and serfdom.

By a "defensive" war socialists have always understood a "*just*" war in this particular sense (Wilhelm Liebknecht once expressed himself precisely in this way\*). It is only in this sense that socialists have always regarded wars "for the defence of the fatherland", or "defensive" wars, as legitimate, progressive and just. For example, if tomorrow, Morocco were to declare war on France, or India on Britain, or Persia or China on Russia, and so on, these would be "just", and "defensive" wars, *irrespective* of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory "Great" Powers.

But imagine a slave-holder who owns 100 slaves warring against another who owns 200 slaves, for a more "just" redistribution of slaves. The use of the term of a "defensive" war, or a war "for the defence of the fatherland", would clearly be historically false in such a case and would in practice be sheer deception of the common people, philistines, and the ignorant, by the astute slave-holders. It is in this way that the peoples are being deceived with "national" ideology and the term of "defence of the fatherland", by the present-day imperialist bourgeoisie, in the war now being waged between slave-holders with the purpose of consolidating slavery.

### **The War of Today Is an Imperialist War**

It is almost universally admitted that this war is an imperialist war. In most cases, however, this term is distorted, or applied to one side, or else a loophole is left for the assertion that this war may, after all, be bourgeois-progressive, and of significance to the national-liberation movement. Imperialism is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, reached only in the twentieth century. Capitalism now finds that the old national states, without whose forma-

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\* Lenin refers to Wilhelm Liebknecht's speech at the Erfurt Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party in 1891.—Ed.

tion it could not have overthrown feudalism, are too cramped for it. Capitalism has developed concentration to such a degree that entire branches of industry are controlled by syndicates, trusts and associations of capitalist multimillionaires and almost the entire globe has been divided up among the "lords of capital" either in the form of colonies, or by entangling other countries in thousands of threads of financial exploitation. Free trade and competition have been superseded by a striving towards monopolies, the seizure of territory for the investment of capital and as sources of raw materials, and so on. From the liberator of nations, which it was in the struggle against feudalism, capitalism in its imperialist stage has turned into the greatest oppressor of nations. Formerly progressive, capitalism has become reactionary; it has developed the forces of production to such a degree that mankind is faced with the alternative of adopting socialism or of experiencing years and even decades of armed struggle between the "Great" Powers for the artificial preservation of capitalism by means of colonies, monopolies, privileges and national oppression of every kind.

**A War Between the Biggest Slave-Holders  
For the Maintenance and Consolidation of Slavery**

To make the significance of imperialism clear, we will quote precise figures showing the partition of the world among the so-called "Great" Powers (i.e., those successful in great plunder).

Hence it will be seen that, since 1876, most of the nations which were foremost fighters for freedom in 1789-1871, have, on the basis of a highly developed and "over-mature" capitalism, become oppressors and enslavers of most of the population and the nations of the globe. From 1876 to 1914, six "Great" Powers grabbed 25 million square kilometres, i.e., an area two and a half times that of Europe! Six Powers have enslaved 523 *million* people in the colonies. For every four inhabitants in the "Great" Powers there are five in



"their" colonies. It is common knowledge that colonies are conquered with fire and sword, that the population of the colonies are brutally treated, and that they are exploited in a thousand ways (by exporting capital, through concessions, etc., cheating in the sale of goods, subjugation by the authorities of the "ruling" nation, and so on and so forth). The Anglo-French bourgeoisie are deceiving the people when they say that they are waging a war for the freedom of nations and of Belgium\*; in fact they are waging a war for the purpose of retaining the huge colonies they have grabbed. The German imperialists would free Belgium, etc., at once if the British and French would agree to "fairly" share their colonies with them. A feature of the situation is that in this war the fate of the colonies is being decided by a war on the Continent. From the standpoint of bourgeois justice and national freedom (or the right of nations to existence), Germany might be considered absolutely in the right as against Britain and France, for she has been "done out" of colonies, her enemies are oppressing an immeasurably far larger number of nations than she is, and the Slavs that are being oppressed by her ally, Austria, undoubtedly enjoy far more freedom than those of tsarist Russia, that veritable "prison of nations". Germany, however, is fighting, not for the liberation of nations, but for their oppression. It is not the business of socialists to help the younger and stronger robber (Germany) to plunder the older and overgorged robbers. Socialists must take advantage of the struggle between the robbers to overthrow all of them. To be able to do this, socialists must first of all tell the people the truth, namely, that this war is, in three respects, a war between slave-holders with the aim of consolidating slavery. This is a war, firstly, to increase the enslavement of the colonies by means of a "more equitable" distribution and subsequent more "concerted" exploitation of them; secondly, to increase the oppression of other

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\* At the beginning of the First World War, Belgium was occupied by German troops.—*Ed.*

nations within the "Great" Powers, since *both* Austria and Russia (Russia in greater degree and with results far worse than Austria) maintain their rule only by such oppression, intensifying it by means of war; and thirdly, to increase and prolong wage slavery, since the proletariat is split up and suppressed, while the capitalists are the gainers, making fortunes out of the war, fanning national prejudices and intensifying reaction, which has raised its head in all countries, even in the freest and most republican.

**"War Is the Continuation of Politics by Other"  
(i.e.: Violent) "Means"**

This famous dictum was uttered by Clausewitz,\* one of the profoundest writers on the problems of war. Marxists have always rightly regarded this thesis as the theoretical basis of views on the significance of any war. It was from this viewpoint that Marx and Engels always regarded the various wars.

Apply this view to the present war. You will see that for decades, for almost half a century, the governments and the ruling classes of Britain and France, Germany and Italy, Austria and Russia have pursued a policy of plundering colonies, oppressing other nations, and suppressing the working-class movement. It is this, and only this, policy that is being continued in the present war. In particular, the policy of both Austria and Russia, in peacetime as well as in war-time, is a policy of enslaving nations, not of liberating them. In China, Persia, India and other dependent countries, on the contrary, we have seen during the past decades a policy of rousing tens and hundreds of millions of people to a national life, of their liberation from the reactionary "Great" Powers' oppression. A war waged on such a historical basis can even today be a bourgeois-progressive war of national liberation.

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\* See Karl Clausewitz, *On War*.—Ed.

If the present war is regarded as a continuation of the politics of the "Great" Powers and of the principal classes within them, a glance will immediately reveal the glaring anti-historicity, falseness and hypocrisy of the view that the "defence-of-the-fatherland" idea can be justified in the present war.

### The Case of Belgium

The favourite plea of the social-chauvinists of the Triple (now Quadruple) Entente (in Russia, Plekhanov and Co.) is the case of Belgium. This instance, however, speaks against them. The German imperialists have brazenly violated the neutrality of Belgium, as belligerent states have done always and everywhere, trampling upon *all* treaties and obligations if necessary. Let us suppose that all states interested in the observance of international treaties should declare war on Germany with the demand that Belgium be liberated and indemnified. In that case, the sympathies of socialists would, of course, be with Germany's enemies. But the whole point is that the Triple (and Quadruple) Entente is waging war, *not* over Belgium: this is common knowledge and only hypocrites will disguise the fact. Britain is grabbing at Germany's colonies and Turkey; Russia is grabbing at Galicia and Turkey, France wants Alsace-Lorraine and even the left bank of the Rhine; a treaty has been concluded with Italy for the division of the spoils (Albania and Asia Minor); bargaining is going on with Bulgaria and Rumania, also for the division of the spoils. In the present war waged by the governments of today, it is *impossible* to help Belgium *otherwise* than by helping to throttle Austria or Turkey, etc.! Where does "defence of the fatherland" come in here? Herein lies the specific feature of imperialist war, a war between reactionary-bourgeois and historically outmoded governments, waged for the purpose of oppressing other nations. Whoever justifies participation in the present war is perpetuating the imperialist oppression of nations. Whoever advocates taking advantage of the present embarrassments of



the governments so as to fight for the social revolution is championing the real freedom of really all nations, which is possible only under socialism.

### **What Russia Is Fighting For**

In Russia, capitalist imperialism of the latest type has fully revealed itself in the policy of tsarism towards Persia, Manchuria and Mongolia, but, in general, military and feudal imperialism is predominant in Russia. In no country in the world are the majority of the population oppressed so much as in Russia; Great Russians constitute only 43 per cent of the population, i.e., less than half; the non-Russians are denied all rights. Of the 170 million inhabitants of Russia, *about 100 million* are oppressed and denied their rights. Tsarism is waging a war to seize Galicia and finally crush the liberties of the Ukrainians, and to obtain possession of Armenia, Constantinople, etc. Tsarism regards the war as a means of diverting attention from the mounting discontent within the country and of suppressing the growing revolutionary movement. To every two Great Russians in Russia today there are two or three non-Russians without even elementary rights: tsarism is striving, by means of the war, to increase the number of nations oppressed by Russia, to perpetuate this oppression, and thereby undermine the struggle for freedom which the Great Russians themselves are waging. The possibility of oppressing and robbing other nations perpetuates economic stagnation, because the source of income is frequently, not the development of productive forces, but the semi-feudal exploitation of non-Russians. Thus on the part of Russia, the war is marked by its profoundly reactionary character, its hostility to national liberation.

### **What Social-Chauvinism Is**

Social-chauvinism is advocacy of the idea of "defence of the fatherland" in the present war. This idea logically leads to the abandonment of the class struggle during the war, to

voting for war credits, etc. In fact, the social-chauvinists are pursuing an anti-proletarian bourgeois policy, for they are actually championing, not "defence of the fatherland" in the sense of combating foreign oppression, but the "right" of one or other of the "Great" Powers to plunder colonies and to oppress other nations. The social-chauvinists reiterate the bourgeois deception of the people that the war is being waged to protect the freedom and existence of nations, thereby taking sides with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Among the social-chauvinists are those who justify and varnish the governments and bourgeoisie of *one* of the belligerent groups of powers, as well as those who, like Kautsky, argue that the socialists of *all* the belligerent powers are equally entitled to "defend the fatherland". Social-chauvinism, which is, in effect, defence of the privileges, the advantages, the right to pillage and plunder, of one's "own" (or any) imperialist bourgeoisie, is the utter betrayal of all socialist convictions and of the decision of the Basle International Socialist Congress.

### **The Basle Manifesto**

The Manifesto on war unanimously adopted in Basle in 1912 has in view the very kind of war between Britain and Germany and their present allies, which broke out in 1914. The Manifesto openly declares that no interests of the people can serve to justify such a war waged "for the sake of the profits of the capitalists and the ambitions of dynasties", on the basis of the imperialist, predatory policy of the Great Powers. The Manifesto openly declares that war is dangerous to "governments" (all of them without exception), notes their fear of "a proletarian revolution", and very definitely points to the example set by the Commune of 1871, and by October-December 1905,\* i.e., *to the examples of rev-*

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\* October and December 1905—the peak period of the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07.—Ed.

*olution and civil war.* Thus, the Basle Manifesto lays down, precisely for the present war, the tactics of the workers' revolutionary struggle on an international scale against their governments, the tactics of proletarian revolution. The Basle Manifesto repeats the words in the Stuttgart resolution that, in the event of war, socialists must take advantage of the "economic and political crisis" it will cause so as to "hasten the downfall of capitalism", i.e., take advantage of the governments' wartime difficulties and the indignation of the masses, to advance the socialist revolution.

The social-chauvinists' policy, their justification of the war from the bourgeois-liberation standpoint, their sanctioning of "defence of the fatherland", their voting for credits, membership in governments, and so on and so forth, are downright treachery to socialism, which can be explained only, as we will soon show, by the victory of opportunism and of the national liberal-labour policy in the majority of European parties.

### **False References to Marx and Engels**

The Russian social-chauvinists (headed by Plekhanov) make references to Marx's tactics in the war of 1870; the German (of the type of Lensch, David and Co.)—to Engels's statement in 1891 that, in the event of war against Russia and France combined, it would be the duty of the German socialists to defend their fatherland; finally, the social-chauvinists of the Kautsky type, who want to reconcile and legitimatise international chauvinism, refer to the fact that Marx and Engels, while condemning war, nevertheless, from 1854-55 to 1870-71 and 1876-77, always took the side of one belligerent state or another, once war had broken out.

All these references are outrageous distortions of the views of Marx and Engels, in the interest of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists, in just the same way as the writings of the anarchists Guillaume and Co. distort the views of Marx and

Engels so as to justify anarchism. The war of 1870-71 was historically progressive on the part of Germany, until Napoleon III was defeated: the latter, together with the tsar, had oppressed Germany for years, keeping her in a state of feudal disunity. But as soon as the war developed into the plundering of France (the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine), Marx and Engels emphatically condemned the Germans. Even at the beginning of the war, Marx and Engels approved of the refusal of Bebel and Liebknecht to vote for war credits, and advised Social-Democrats not to merge with the bourgeoisie, but to uphold the independent class interests of the proletariat. To apply to the present imperialist war the appraisal of this bourgeois-progressive war of national liberation is a mockery of the truth. The same applies with still greater force to the war of 1854-55, and to all the wars of the nineteenth century, when there existed *no* modern imperialism, *no* mature objective conditions for socialism, and *no* mass socialist parties *in any* of the belligerent countries, i.e., none of the conditions from which the Basle Manifesto deduced the tactics of a "proletarian revolution" *in connection* with a war between Great Powers.

Anyone who today refers to Marx's attitude towards the wars of the epoch of the *progressive* bourgeoisie, and forgets Marx's statement that "the workingmen have no country"\*—a statement that applies *precisely* to the period of the reactionary and outmoded bourgeoisie, to the epoch of the socialist revolution, is shamelessly distorting Marx, and is substituting the bourgeois point of view for the socialist.

### The Collapse of the Second International

Socialists of all the world solemnly declared in Basle, in 1912, that they regarded the impending war in Europe as the "criminal" and most reactionary deed of *all* the govern-

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\* See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Ch. II. "Proletarians and Communists".—Ed.

ments, which must hasten the downfall of capitalism by inevitably engendering a revolution against it. The war came, the crisis was there. Instead of revolutionary tactics, most of the Social-Democratic parties launched reactionary tactics, and went over to the side of their respective governments and bourgeoisie. This betrayal of socialism signifies the collapse of the Second (1889-1914) International, and we must realise what caused this collapse, what brought social-chauvinism into being and gave it strength.

**Social-Chauvinism**  
**Is the Acme of Opportunism**

Throughout the existence of the Second International, a struggle was raging within all the Social-Democratic parties, between their revolutionary and the opportunist wings. In a number of countries a split took place along this line (Britain, Italy, Holland, Bulgaria). Not one Marxist has ever doubted that opportunism expresses bourgeois policies within the working-class movement, expresses the interests of the petty bourgeoisie and the alliance of a tiny section of bourgeoisified workers with their "*own*" bourgeoisie, against the interests of the proletarian masses, the oppressed masses.

The objective conditions at the close of the nineteenth century greatly intensified opportunism, converted the utilisation of bourgeois legality into subservience to the latter, created a thin crust of a working-class officialdom and aristocracy and attracted numerous petty-bourgeois "fellow travellers" to the Social-Democratic parties.

The war has speeded up this development and transformed opportunism into social-chauvinism, transformed the secret alliance between the opportunists and the bourgeoisie into an open one. Simultaneously, the military authorities have everywhere instituted martial law and have muzzled the mass of the workers, whose old leaders have nearly all gone over to the bourgeoisie.

Opportunism and social-chauvinism stand on a common economic basis—the interests of a thin crust of privileged workers and of the petty bourgeoisie, who are defending their privileged position, their “right” to some modicum of the profits that their “own” national bourgeoisie obtain from robbing other nations, from the advantages of their Great-Power status, etc.

Opportunism and social-chauvinism have the same politico-ideological content—class collaboration instead of the class struggle, renunciation of revolutionary methods of struggle, helping one’s “own” government in its embarrassed situation, instead of taking advantage of these embarrassments so as to advance the revolution. If we take Europe as a whole and if we pay attention, not to individuals (even the most authoritative), we will find that it is the opportunist *trend* that has become the bulwark of social-chauvinism, whereas from the camp of the revolutionaries, more or less consistent protests against it are heard from almost all sides. And if we take, for example, the grouping of trends at the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress in 1907, we shall find that international Marxism was opposed to imperialism, while international opportunism was already in favour of it at the time.

**Unity With the Opportunists  
Means an Alliance Between  
the Workers and Their “Own” National Bourgeoisie,  
and Splitting the International Revolutionary Working Class**

In the past, before the war, opportunism was often looked upon as a legitimate, though “deviationist” and “extremist”, component of the Social-Democratic Party. The war has shown the impossibility of this in the future. Opportunism has “matured”, and is now playing to the full its role as emissary of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement. Unity with the opportunists has become sheer hypocrisy, exemplified by the German Social-Democratic Party. On every

important occasion (e.g., the August 4 vote\*), the opportunists present an ultimatum, to which they give effect through their numerous links with the bourgeoisie, their majority on the executives of the trade unions, etc. Today *unity* with the opportunists *actually* means subordinating the working class to their "own" national bourgeoisie, and an alliance with the latter for the purpose of oppressing other nations and of fighting for dominant-nation privileges; it means *splitting* the revolutionary proletariat of all countries.

No matter how hard, in individual instances, the struggle may be against the opportunists, who predominate in many organisations, whatever the specific nature of the purging of the workers' parties of opportunists in individual countries, this process is inevitable and fruitful. Reformist socialism is dying; regenerated socialism "will be revolutionary, uncompromising and insurrectionary", to use the apt expression of the French Socialist Paul Golay.

### "Kautskyism"

Kautsky, the leading authority in the Second International, is a most typical and striking example of how a verbal recognition of Marxism has led in practice to its conversion into "Struivism" or into "Brentanoism". Another example is Plekhanov. By means of patent sophistry, Marxism is stripped of its revolutionary living spirit; *everything* is recognised in Marxism *except* the revolutionary methods of struggle, the propaganda and preparation of those methods, and the education of the masses in this direction. Kautsky "reconciles" in an unprincipled way the fundamental idea of social-chauvinism, recognition of defence of the fatherland in the present war, with a diplomatic sham concession to the Lefts—his abstention from voting for war credits, his verbal claim

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\* On August 4, 1914 the Social-Democratic group in the German Reichstag voted in favour of granting war credits to the government of Wilhelm II.—*Ed.*

to be in the opposition, etc. Kautsky, who in 1909 wrote a book on the approaching epoch of revolutions and on the connection between war and revolution, Kautsky, who in 1912 signed the Basle Manifesto on taking revolutionary advantage of the impending war, is outdoing himself in justifying and embellishing social-chauvinism and, like Plekhanov, joins the bourgeoisie in ridiculing any thought of revolution and all steps towards the immediate revolutionary struggle.

The working class cannot play its world-revolutionary role unless it wages a ruthless struggle against this backsliding, spinelessness, subservience to opportunism, and unparalleled vulgarisation of the theories of Marxism. Kautskyism is not fortuitous; it is the social product of the contradictions within the Second International, a blend of loyalty to Marxism in word, and subordination to opportunism in deed.

This fundamental falseness of "Kautskyism" manifests itself in different ways in different countries. In Holland, Roland-Holst, while rejecting the idea of defending the fatherland, defends unity with the opportunists' party. In Russia, Trotsky, while rejecting this idea, also defends unity with the opportunist and chauvinist *Nasha Zarya* group. In Rumania, Rakovsky, while declaring war on opportunism as being responsible for the collapse of the International, is at the same time ready to recognise the legitimacy of the idea of defending the fatherland. All this is a manifestation of the evil which the Dutch Marxists (Gorter and Pannekoek) have called "passive radicalism", and which amounts to replacing revolutionary Marxism with eclecticism in theory, and servility to or impotence towards opportunism, in practice.

**The Marxists' Slogan Is a Slogan  
of Revolutionary Social-Democracy**

The war has undoubtedly created a most acute crisis and has immeasurably increased the distress of the masses. The reactionary nature of this war, and the unblushing lies told by the bourgeoisie of *all* countries to conceal their predatory



aims with "national" ideology are, on the basis of an objectively revolutionary situation, inevitably creating revolutionary moods among the masses. It is our duty to help the masses become conscious of these moods, deepen them and give them shape. This task finds correct expression only in the slogan: convert the imperialist war into a civil war; *all* consistently waged class struggles in wartime and all seriously conducted "mass-action" tactics inevitably lead to this. It is impossible to foretell whether a powerful revolutionary movement will flare up in connection with, during or after the first or the second imperialist war of the Great Powers; in any case it is our bounden duty to work systematically and unswervingly in this direction.

The Basle Manifesto makes direct reference to the example set by the Paris Commune, i.e., the conversion of a war between governments into a civil war. Half a century ago, the proletariat was too weak; the objective conditions for socialism had not yet matured, there could be no co-ordination and co-operation between the revolutionary movements in all the belligerent countries; the "national ideology" (the traditions of 1792), with which a section of the Parisian workers were imbued, was a petty-bourgeois weakness, which Marx noted at the time, and was one of the causes of the downfall of the Commune. Half a century since that time, the conditions that then weakened the revolution have ceased to operate, and today it is unpardonable for a socialist to resign himself to a renunciation of activities in the spirit of the Paris Communards.

#### **The Example Set by the Fraternisation in the Trenches**

Cases of fraternisation between the soldiers of the belligerent nations, even in the trenches, have been reported in the bourgeois newspapers of all the belligerent countries. The grave importance attached to the matter by the governments and the bourgeoisie is evidenced by the harsh orders

against such fraternisation issued by the military authorities (of Germany and Britain). If such cases of fraternisation have proved possible even when opportunism reigns supreme in the top ranks of the Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe, and when social-chauvinism has the support of the entire Social-Democratic press and all the authorities of the Second International, then that shows us how possible it would be to shorten the present criminal, reactionary and slave-holders' war and to organise a revolutionary international movement, if systematic work were conducted in this direction, at least by the Left-wing socialists in all the belligerent countries.

#### **The Importance of an Underground Organisation**

No less than the opportunists, leading anarchists all over the world have disgraced themselves with social-chauvinism (in the spirit of Plekhanov and Kautsky) in this war. One of the useful results of this war will undoubtedly be that it will kill both anarchism and opportunism.

While under no circumstances or conditions refraining from utilising all legal opportunities, however small, for organising the masses and for the propaganda of socialism, the Social-Democratic parties must break with subservience to legality. "You shoot first, Messieurs the Bourgeoisie," wrote Engels, hinting at civil war and at the necessity of our violating legality *after* the bourgeoisie had done so. The crisis has shown that the bourgeoisie violate it in all countries, even the freest, and that it is impossible to lead the masses to a revolution unless an underground organisation is set up for the purpose of advocating, discussing, appraising and preparing revolutionary methods of struggle. In Germany, for example, all the *honest* things that socialists are doing, are being done despite despicable opportunism and hypocritical "Kautskyism", and moreover are being

done secretly. In Britain, people are being sentenced to penal servitude for printing appeals against joining up.

It is a betrayal of socialism to consider compatible with membership in the Social-Democratic Party any repudiation of underground methods of propaganda, and ridicule of those methods, in the legally published press.

#### **On the Defeat of One's "Own" Government in the Imperialist War**

The standpoint of social-chauvinism is shared equally by both advocates of victory for their governments in the present war and by advocates of the slogan of "neither victory nor defeat". A revolutionary class cannot but wish for the defeat of its government in a reactionary war, and cannot fail to see that the latter's military reverses must facilitate its overthrow. Only a bourgeois who believes that a war started by governments must necessarily end as a war between governments, and wants it to end as such, can regard as "ridiculous" and "absurd" the idea that the socialists of *all* the belligerent countries should express their wish that *all* their "own" governments should be defeated. On the contrary, it is a statement of this kind that would be in keeping with the innermost thoughts of every class-conscious worker, and be in line with our activities for the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war.

The serious anti-war agitation being conducted by a section of the British, German and Russian socialists has undoubtedly "weakened the military might" of the respective governments, but that agitation stands to the credit of the socialists. The latter must explain to the masses that they have no other road of salvation except the revolutionary overthrow of their "own" governments, whose difficulties in the present war must be taken advantage of precisely for that purpose.

### **Pacifism and the Peace Slogan**

The temper of the masses in favour of peace often expresses the beginning of protest, anger and a realisation of the reactionary nature of the war. It is the duty of all Social-Democrats to utilise that temper. They will take a most ardent part in any movement and in any demonstration motivated by that sentiment, but they will not deceive the people with admitting the idea that a peace without annexations, without oppression of nations, without plunder, and without the embryo of new wars among the present governments and ruling classes, is possible in the absence of a revolutionary movement. Such deception of the people would merely mean playing into the hands of the secret diplomacy of the belligerent governments and facilitating their counter-revolutionary plans. Whoever wants a lasting and democratic peace must stand for civil war against the governments and the bourgeoisie.

### **The Right of Nations to Self-Determination**

The most widespread deception of the people by the bourgeoisie in the present war consists in their using the ideology of "national liberation" to cloak their predatory aims. The British have promised the liberation of Belgium, the Germans—of Poland, etc. Actually, as we have seen, this is a war waged by the oppressors of most of the world's nations for the purpose of increasing and expanding that oppression.

Socialists cannot achieve their great aim without fighting against all oppression of nations. They must, therefore, unequivocally demand that the Social-Democratic parties of the *oppressor* countries (especially of the so-called "Great" Powers) should recognise and champion the *oppressed* nation's right to self-determination, in the specifically political sense of the term, i.e., the right to political secession. The

socialist of a ruling or a colonial nation who does not stand for that right is a chauvinist.

The championing of this right, far from encouraging the formation of petty states, leads, on the contrary, to the freer, fearless and therefore wider and more universal formation of large states and federations of states, which are more to the advantage of the masses and are more in keeping with economic development.

In their turn, the socialists of the *oppressed* nations must unflinchingly fight for complete unity of the *workers* of the oppressed and oppressor nationalities (this including organisational unity). The idea of the juridical separation of one nation from another (the so-called "cultural-national autonomy" advocated by Bauer and Renner) is reactionary.

Imperialism is the epoch of the constantly increasing oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of "Great" Powers; it is therefore impossible to fight for the socialist international revolution against imperialism unless the right of nations to self-determination is recognised. "No nation can be free if it oppresses other nations" (Marx and Engels). A proletariat that tolerates the slightest coercion of other nations by its "own" nation cannot be a socialist proletariat.

## CHAPTER II

### Classes and Parties in Russia

#### The Bourgeoisie and the War

In one respect, the Russian Government has not lagged behind its European *confrères*; like them, it has succeeded in deceiving its "own" people on a grand scale. A huge and monstrous machine of falsehood and cunning has been set going in Russia as well, to infect the masses with chauvin-

ism, and create the impression that the tsarist government is waging a "just" war, and is disinterestedly defending its Slav "brothers", etc.

The landowning class and the upper stratum of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie have ardently supported the tsarist government's bellicose policy. They are rightly expecting enormous material gains and privileges for themselves from the carving up of the Turkish and the Austrian legacy. A series of their congresses have already voiced anticipation of the profits that will flow into their pockets should the tsarist army be victorious. Moreover, the reactionaries are very well aware that if anything can stave off the downfall of the Romanov monarchy and delay the new revolution in Russia, it can only be a foreign war ending in victory for the tsar.

Broad strata of the urban "middle" bourgeoisie, of the bourgeois intelligentsia, professional people, etc., have also been infected with chauvinism—at all events at the beginning of the war. The Cadets—the party of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie—have given the tsar's government full and unconditional support. In the sphere of foreign policy, the Cadets have long been a government party. Pan-Slavism—with the aid of which tsarist diplomacy has more than once carried out its grand political swindles—has become the official ideology of the Cadets. Russian liberalism has degenerated into *national* liberalism. It is vying in "patriotism" with the Black Hundreds; it always willingly votes for militarism on land and at sea, etc. Approximately the same thing is to be seen in the camp of Russian liberalism as in Germany in the seventies of the last century, when "free-thinking" liberalism decayed and from it arose a national-liberal party. The Russian liberal bourgeoisie has definitely taken to the path of counter-revolution. The R.S.D.L.P.'s point of view on this question has been fully confirmed. The facts have shattered the view held by our opportunists that Russian liberalism is still a motive force of a revolution in Russia.

The ruling clique has also succeeded, with the aid of the bourgeois press, the clergy, etc., in rousing chauvinist sentiments among the peasantry. With the return of the soldiers from the field of slaughter, however, sentiment in the rural areas will undoubtedly turn against the tsarist monarchy. The bourgeois-democratic parties that come into contact with the peasantry have failed to withstand the chauvinist wave. The Trudovik party in the Duma refused to vote for war credits, but through its leader Kerensky it made a "patriotic" declaration which played into the hands of the monarchy. In general, the entire legally published Narodnik press followed the liberals' lead. Even the Left wing of bourgeois democracy—the so-called Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which is affiliated to the International Socialist Bureau—is swimming with the same tide. Mr. Rubanovich, that party's representative on the I.S.B., has come out as a self-confessed social-chauvinist. Half of the number of this party's delegates to the London Conference of Socialists of the Entente countries voted for a chauvinist resolution (while the other half abstained from voting). Chauvinists predominate in the illegally published press of the Socialist-Revolutionaries (the newspaper *Novosti* and others). The revolutionaries from "bourgeois circles", i.e., bourgeois revolutionaries who are not connected with the working class, have come to a dead end in this war. The sad fate of Kropotkin, Burtsev and Rubanovich is highly significant.

### **The Working Class and the War**

The proletariat is the only class in Russia that nobody has been able to infect with chauvinism. Only the most ignorant strata of the workers were involved in the few excesses that occurred in the early days of the war. The part played by workers in the Moscow anti-German riots has been greatly exaggerated. By and large, the working class of Russia has proved immune to chauvinism.

The explanation lies in the revolutionary situation in the

country and in the Russian proletariat's general conditions of life.

The years 1912-14 marked the beginning of a great new revolutionary upswing in Russia. We again witnessed a great strike movement, the like of which the world has never known. The number involved in the mass revolutionary strike in 1913 was, at the very lowest estimate, one and a half million, and in 1914 it rose to over two million, approaching the 1905 level. The first barricade battles took place in St. Petersburg, on the eve of the war.

The underground Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has performed its duty to the International. The banner of internationalism has not wavered in its hands. Our Party long ago severed all organisational ties with the opportunist groups and elements; its feet were not weighed down with the fetters of opportunism and of "legalism at any price", this circumstance helping it perform its revolutionary duty—just as the break with Bissolati's opportunist party has helped the Italian comrades.

The general situation in our country does not favour any efflorescence of "socialist" opportunism among the masses of the workers. In Russia we see a series of shades of opportunism and reformism among the intelligentsia, the petty bourgeoisie, etc., but it has affected an insignificant minority among the politically active sections of the workers. The privileged stratum of factory workers and clerical staff is very thin in our country. The fetishism of legality could not appear here. Before the war, the liquidators (the party of the opportunists led by Axelrod, Potresov, Cherevanin, Maslov, and others) found no serious support among the masses of the workers. The elections to the Fourth Duma resulted in the return of *all* six of the anti-liquidationist working-class candidates. The circulation of the legally published workers' press in Petrograd and Moscow and the collection of funds for it have incontrovertibly proved that four-fifths of the class-conscious workers are opposed to opportunism and liquidationism.



Since the beginning of the war, the tsar's government has arrested and exiled thousands and thousands of advanced workers, members of our underground R.S.D.L.P. This circumstance, together with the establishment of martial law in the country, the suppression of our newspapers, and so forth, has retarded the movement. But for all that, our Party is continuing its underground revolutionary activities. In Petrograd, our Party Committee is publishing the underground newspaper *Proletarsky Golos*.

Articles from *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the Central Organ published abroad, are reprinted in Petrograd and sent out to the provinces. Leaflets are secretly printed, and are circulated even in army barracks. In various secluded places outside the city, secret workers' meetings are held. Of late, big strikes of metalworkers have begun in Petrograd. In connection with these strikes, our Petrograd Committee has issued several appeals to the workers.

#### **The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Group in the Duma, and the War**

In 1913 a split took place among the Social-Democratic deputies to the Duma. On one side were the seven supporters of opportunism, led by Chkheidze; they had been returned by seven non-proletarian gubernias, where the workers totalled 214,000. On the other side were six deputies, *all* from the workers' curia, elected for the most industrialised centres in Russia, in which the workers number 1,008,000.

The chief issue in the split was the *alternative* between the tactics of revolutionary Marxism and the tactics of opportunist reformism. In practice, the disagreement manifested itself mainly in the sphere of *extra-parliamentary* work among the masses. In Russia this work had to be conducted secretly, if those conducting it wished to remain on a revolutionary basis. The Chkheidze group remained a faithful ally of the liquidators (who repudiated underground work) and defended them in all talks with workers and at all meet-

ings. Hence the split. The six deputies formed the R.S.D.L. Duma group, which as a year's work has incontrovertibly shown, has the support of the vast majority of Russian workers.

On the outbreak of the war the disagreement stood out in glaring relief. The Chkheidze group confined itself to parliamentary action. It did not vote for war credits, for that would have roused a storm of indignation among the workers (we have seen that in Russia even the petty-bourgeois Trudoviks did not vote for war credits); neither did it utter any protest against social-chauvinism.

Expressing the political line of our Party, the R.S.D.L. Duma group acted quite differently. It carried into the midst of the working class a protest against the war, and conducted anti-imperialist propaganda among the masses of the Russian proletarians.

It met with a very sympathetic response from the workers—which frightened the government, compelling it, in flagrant violation of its own laws, to arrest our deputy comrades and exile them to Siberia for life. In its very first official announcement of the arrest of our comrades, the tsarist government wrote:

"An entirely exceptional position in this respect was taken by some members of Social-Democratic societies, the object of whose activities was to shake the military might of Russia by agitating against the war, by means of underground appeals and verbal propaganda."

Only our Party, through its Central Committee, gave a negative reply to Vandervelde's well-known appeal for a "temporary" cessation of the struggle against tsarism. Moreover, it has now become known, from the testimony of Prince Kudashev, the tsar's envoy to Belgium, that Vandervelde did not draw up this appeal alone, but in collaboration with the above-mentioned envoy. The guiding centre of the liquidators agreed with Vandervelde and officially stated in the press that "*in its activities it does not oppose the war*".

The principal accusation levelled by the tsar's govern-

ment against our deputy comrades was that they distributed this negative reply to Vandervelde among the workers.

At the trial, the Prosecutor for the Crown, Mr. Nenarokov, set up the German and French socialists as examples to our comrades. "The German Social-Democrats," he said, "voted for war credits and proved to be friends of the government. That is how the German Social-Democrats acted, but the dismal knights of Russian Social-Democracy did not act in this way. . . . The socialists of Belgium and France unanimously forgot their quarrels with the other classes, forgot party strife, and unhesitatingly rallied about the flag." But the members of the R.S.D.L. group, on instructions from the Party's Central Committee, did not act in this way, he complained. . . .

The trial revealed an imposing picture of the extensive underground anti-war agitation our Party was conducting among the masses of the proletariat. It goes without saying, that the tsar's court "uncovered" only a fraction of the activities our comrades were conducting in this field, but even what was revealed showed how much had been done within the brief span of a few months.

At the trial the underground manifestos issued by our groups and committees, against the war and for international tactics, were read out. The members of the R.S.D.L. group were in touch with the class-conscious workers all over Russia and did everything in their power to help the workers appraise the war from the Marxist standpoint.

Comrade Muranov, the deputy of the workers of Kharkov Gubernia, stated at the trial:

"Realising that the people did not return me to the Duma just to warm my seat there, I travelled about the country to ascertain the mood of the working class." He admitted that he had undertaken the functions of a secret agitator of our Party, that in the Urals he had organised workers' committees at the Verkhneisetsky Works and elsewhere. The trial showed that, after the outbreak of war, members of the R.S.D.L. Duma group travelled for propaganda purposes,

throughout almost the whole of Russia and that Muranov, Petrovsky, Badayev and others arranged numerous workers' meetings, at which anti-war resolutions were passed, and so on.

The tsar's government threatened the accused with capital punishment. That was why they did not all behave at the trial as courageously as Comrade Muranov. They tried to make it difficult for the Prosecutors to secure convictions. This is being unworthily utilised by the Russian social-chauvinists so as to obscure the crux of the issue, viz., the kind of parliamentarianism the working class needs.

Parliamentarianism is recognised by Züdekum and Heine, Sembat and Vaillant, Bissolati and Mussolini, Chkheidze and Plekhanov; it is also recognised by our comrades in the R.S.D.L. group, as well as by the Bulgarian and Italian comrades who have broken with the chauvinists. There are different kinds of parliamentarianism. Some utilise the parliamentary arena in order to curry favour with their governments, or, at best, to wash their hands of everything, as the Chkheidze group has done. Others utilise parliamentarianism in order to remain revolutionary to the end, to perform their duty as socialists and internationalists even under the most difficult circumstances. The parliamentary activities of some give them ministerial posts; the parliamentary activities of others take them to prison, exile, and penal servitude. Some serve the bourgeoisie, others—the proletariat. Some are social-imperialists. Others are revolutionary Marxists.

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## A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism

"No one can discredit revolutionary Social-Democracy as long as it does not discredit itself." That maxim always comes to mind, and must always be borne in mind, when any major theoretical or tactical proposition of Marxism is victorious, or even placed on the order of the day, and when, *besides* outright and resolute opponents, it is assailed by friends who hopelessly discredit and disparage it and turn it into a caricature. That has happened time and again in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement. In the early nineties, the victory of Marxism in the revolutionary movement was attended by the emergence of a caricature of Marxism in the shape of Economism, or "strikeism". The Iskristis would not have been able to uphold the fundamentals of proletarian theory and policy, either against petty-bourgeois Narodism or bourgeois liberalism, without long years of struggle against Economism. It was the same with Bolshevism, which triumphed in the mass labour movement in 1905 due, among other things, to correct application of the boycott of the tsarist Duma slogan\* in the autumn of 1905, when the key battles of the Russian revolution were being fought. Bolshevism had to face—and overcome by struggle—another caricature\*\* in 1908-10, when Alexinsky and others noisily opposed participation in the Third Duma.

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\* The reference is to the boycott of the Bulygin Duma organised by the Bolsheviks in 1905.—*Ed.*

\*\* Lenin applies this name to otzovism, a Left-opportunist trend that spread among a section of the Bolsheviks after the defeat of the 1905-07 Revolution.—*Ed.*

It is the same today too. Recognition of the *present* war as imperialist and emphasis on *its* close connection with the imperialist era of capitalism encounters not only resolute opponents, but also irresolute friends, for whom the word "imperialism" has become all the rage. Having *memorised* the word, they are offering the workers hopelessly confused theories and reviving many of the old mistakes of the old Economism. Capitalism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with political problems, the old Economists reasoned in 1894-1901, falling into rejection of the political struggle in Russia. Imperialism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with the problems of political democracy, reason the present-day imperialist Economists. Kievsky's article\*, printed above, merits attention as a sample of these sentiments, as one such caricature of Marxism, as the first attempt to provide anything like an integral literary exposition of the vacillation that has been apparent in certain circles of our Party abroad since early 1915.

If imperialist Economism were to spread among the Marxists, who in the present great crisis of socialism\*\* have resolutely come out against social-chauvinism and for revolutionary internationalism, that would be a very grave blow to our trend—and to our Party. For it would discredit it

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\* Lenin refers to the article by P. Kievsky (Y. L. Pyatakov) "The Proletariat and the 'Right of Nations to Self-Determination' in the Era of Finance Capital". Lenin's article "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" and this article by Kievsky were meant for No. 3 of *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*. But No. 3 was not published and the articles did not appear in print.—Ed.

\*\* Lenin means the collapse of the Second International and the split of the international socialist movement in 1914. When the First World War broke out most leaders of the Socialist parties belonging to the Second International betrayed socialism and came out in favour of the imperialist war, siding with their governments. The Russian Bolsheviks, led by Lenin, the German Left Social-Democrats—Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and others—and some groups in other Socialist parties remained loyal to the principle of internationalism and called on the workers of their countries to wage a struggle against their imperialist governments and the imperialist war.—Ed.

from within, from its own ranks, would make it a vehicle of caricaturised Marxism. It is therefore necessary to thoroughly discuss at least the most important of Kievsky's numerous errors, regardless of how "uninteresting" this may be, and regardless of the fact, also, that all too often we shall have to tediously explain elementary truths which the thoughtful and attentive reader has learned and understood long since from our literature of 1914 and 1915.

We shall begin with the "central" point of Kievsky's disquisitions in order to immediately bring to the reader the very "substance" of this new trend of imperialist Economism.

### 1. The Marxist Attitude Towards War and "Defence of the Fatherland"

Kievsky is convinced, and wants to convince his reader, that he "disagrees" *only* with §9 of our Party Programme dealing with national self-determination.\* He is very angry and tries to refute the charge that on the question of democracy he is departing from the fundamentals of Marxism *in general*, than he has "betrayed" (the angry quotation marks are Kievsky's) Marxism on basic issues. But the point is that the moment our author begins to discuss his allegedly partial disagreement on an individual issue, the moment he adduces his arguments, considerations, etc., he immediately reveals that he is deviating from Marxism all along the line. Take §b (Section 2) of his article. "This demand [i.e., national self-determination] directly [!!] leads to social-patriotism," our author proclaims, explaining that the "treasonous" slogan of fatherland defence follows "quite [!] logically [!] from the right of nations to self-determination"... In his opinion, self-determination implies "sanctioning the treason of the French and Belgian social-patriots, who are defending

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\* Clause 9 of the R.S.D.L.P. Programme, adopted at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903, contained a demand for the self-determination for all nations.—*Ed.*

this independence [the national independence of France and Belgium] with arms in hand! They are *doing* what the supporters of 'self-determination' only advocate. . . ." "Defence of the fatherland belongs to the arsenal of our worst enemies. . . ." "We categorically refuse to understand how one can *simultaneously* be against defence of the fatherland and for self-determination, against the fatherland and for it."

That's Kievsky. He obviously has not understood our resolutions against the fatherland defence slogan in the present war. It is therefore necessary again to explain the meaning of what is so clearly set out in our resolutions.

The resolution our Party adopted at its Berne Conference in March 1915, "On the Defence of the Fatherland Slogan", begins with the words: "*The present war is, in substance*". . . .

That the resolution deals with the *present* war could not have been put more plainly. The words "in substance" indicate that we must distinguish between the apparent and the real, between appearance and substance, between the word and the deed. The purpose of all talk about defence of the fatherland in this war is mendaciously to present as national the imperialist war of 1914-16, waged for the division of colonies, the plunder of foreign lands, etc. And to obviate even the slightest possibility of distorting our views, we added to the resolution a special paragraph on "*genuinely* national wars", which "took place *especially* (especially does not mean exclusively!) between 1789 and 1871."

The resolution explains that the "basis" of these "genuinely" national wars was a "long process of mass national movements, of a struggle against absolutism and feudalism, the overthrow of national oppression". . . .

Clear, it would seem. The present imperialist war stems from the general conditions of the imperialist era and is not accidental, not an exception, not a deviation from the general and typical. Talk of defence of the fatherland is therefore a deception of the people, for this war is *not* a national war. In a *genuinely* national war the words "defence of the fatherland" are *not* a deception and *we are not opposed to*



it. Such (genuinely national) wars took place "especially" in 1789-1871, and our resolution, while not denying by a single word that they are possible now too, explains how we should distinguish a genuinely national from an imperialist war covered by deceptive national slogans. Specifically, in order to distinguish the two we must examine whether the "basis" of the war is a "long process of mass national movements", the "overthrow of national oppression".

The resolution on "pacifism" expressly states: "Social-Democrats cannot overlook the positive significance of revolutionary wars, i.e., not imperialist wars, but such as were conducted, for instance [note: "for instance"], between 1789 and 1871 with the aim of doing away with national oppression. . . ." Could our 1915 Party resolution speak of the national wars waged from 1789 to 1871 and say that we do not deny the positive significance of such wars if they were not considered possible today too? Certainly not.

A commentary, or popular explanation, of our Party resolutions is given in the Lenin and Zinoviev pamphlet *Socialism and War*. It plainly states, on page 5, that "socialists have regarded wars 'for the defence of the fatherland', or 'defensive' wars, as legitimate, progressive and just" *only* in the sense of "overthrowing alien oppression". It cites an example: Persia against Russia, "*etc.*", and says: "These would be just, and defensive wars, irrespective of who would be the first to attack; any socialist would wish the oppressed, dependent and unequal states victory over the oppressor, slave-holding and predatory 'Great' Powers."

The pamphlet appeared in August 1915 and there are German and French translations. Kievsky is fully aware of its contents. And never, on no occasion, has he or anyone else challenged the resolution on the defence of the fatherland slogan, or the resolution on pacifism, or their interpretation in the pamphlet. Never, not once! We are therefore entitled to ask: are we slandering Kievsky when we say that he has absolutely failed to understand Marxism if, beginning with March 1915, he has not challenged our Party's views

on the war, whereas now, in August 1916, in an article on self-determination, i.e., on a supposedly partial issue, he reveals an amazing lack of understanding of a *general* issue?

Kievsky says that the fatherland defence slogan is "treasonous". We can confidently assure him that *every* slogan is and always will be "treasonous" *for those* who mechanically repeat it without understanding its meaning, without giving it proper thought, *for those* who merely memorise the words without analysing their implications.

What, generally speaking, is "defence of the fatherland"? Is it a scientific concept relating to economics, politics, etc.? No. It is a much bandied about current expression, sometimes simply a philistine phrase, intended to *justify the war*. Nothing more. Absolutely nothing! The term "treasonous" can apply only in the sense that the philistine is capable of justifying *any* war by pleading "we are defending our fatherland", whereas Marxism, which does not degrade itself by stooping to the philistine's level, requires an historical analysis of each war in order to determine whether or not *that particular* war can be considered progressive, whether it serves the interests of democracy and the proletariat and, in *that sense*, is legitimate, just, etc.

The defence of the fatherland slogan is all too often unconscious philistine justification of war and reveals inability to analyse the meaning and implications of a particular war and see it in historical perspective.

Marxism makes that analysis and says: *if* the "substance" of a war is, *for example*, the overthrow of alien oppression (which was *especially* typical of Europe in 1789-1871), then such a war is progressive as far as the oppressed state or nation is concerned. *If*, however, the "substance" of a war is redivision of colonies, division of booty, plunder of foreign lands (and such is the war of 1914-16), then all talk of defending the fatherland is "sheer deception of the people".

How, then, can we disclose and define the "substance" of a war? War is the continuation of policy. Consequently, we must examine the policy pursued prior to the war, the policy

that led to and brought about the war. If it was an imperialist policy, i.e., one designed to safeguard the interests of finance capital and rob and oppress colonies and foreign countries, then the war stemming from that policy is imperialist. If it was a national liberation policy, i.e., one expressive of the mass movement against national oppression, then the war stemming from that policy is a war of national liberation.

The philistine does not realise that war is "the continuation of policy", and consequently limits himself to the formula that "the enemy has attacked us", "the enemy has invaded my country", without stopping to think *what issues* are at stake in the war, *which* classes are waging it, and with *what* political objects. Kievsky stoops right down to the level of such a philistine when he declares that Belgium has been occupied by the Germans, and hence, from the point of view of self-determination, the "Belgian social-patriots are right", or: the Germans have occupied part of France, hence, "Guesde can be satisfied", for "what is involved is territory populated by his nation" (and not by an alien nation).

For the philistine the important thing is *where* the armies stand, who is winning *at the moment*. For the Marxist the important thing is *what issues* are at stake in *this* war, during which first one, then the other army may be on top.

What is the present war being fought over? The answer is given in our resolution (based on the policy the belligerent powers pursued for decades prior to the war). England, France and Russia are fighting to keep the colonies they have seized, to be able to rob Turkey, etc. Germany is fighting to take over these colonies and to be able herself to rob Turkey, etc. Let us suppose even that the Germans take Paris or St. Petersburg. Would that change the nature of the present war? Not at all. The Germans' purpose—and more important, the policy that would bring it to realisation if they were to win—is to seize the colonies, establish domination over Turkey, annex areas populated by other nations, for instance, Poland, etc. It is definitely not to bring the French

or the Russians under foreign domination. The real essence of the present war is not national but imperialist. In other words, it is not being fought to enable one side to overthrow national oppression, which the other side is trying to maintain. It is a war between two groups of oppressors, between two freebooters over the division of their booty, over who shall rob Turkey and the colonies.

In short: a war *between* imperialist Great Powers (i.e., powers that oppress a whole number of nations and enmesh them in dependence of finance capital, etc.), or *in alliance* with the Great Powers, is an imperialist war. Such is the war of 1914-16. And in *this* war "defence of the fatherland" is a deception, an attempt to justify the war.

A war *against* imperialist, i.e., oppressing, powers by oppressed (for example, colonial) nations is a genuine national war. It is possible today too. "Defence of the fatherland" in a war waged by an oppressed nation against a foreign oppressor is not a deception. Socialists are *not* opposed to "defence of the fatherland" in *such* a war.

National self-determination is the same as the struggle for complete national liberation, for complete independence, against annexation, and socialists *cannot*—without ceasing to be socialists—reject *such* a struggle in whatever form, right down to an uprising or war.

Kievsky thinks he is arguing against Plekhanov: it was Plekhanov who pointed to the link between self-determination and defence of the fatherland! Kievsky *believed* Plekhanov that the link was *really of the kind* Plekhanov made it out to be. And having believed him, Kievsky took fright and decided that he must reject self-determination so as not to fall into Plekhanov's conclusions. . . . There is great trust in Plekhanov, and great fright, but there is no trace of *thought* about the substance of Plekhanov's mistake!

The social-chauvinists plead self-determination in order to present this war as a national war. There is only one correct way of combating them: we must show that the war is being fought not to liberate nations, but to determine which

of the great robbers will oppress *more* nations. To fall into negation of wars *really* waged for liberating nations is to present the worst possible caricature of Marxism. Plekhanov and the French social-chauvinists harp on the republic in France in order to justify its "defence" against the German monarchy. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either the republic or a war *really* fought to preserve the republic!! The German social-chauvinists point to universal suffrage and compulsory primary education in their country to justify its "defence" against tsarism. If we were to follow Kievsky's line of reasoning, we would have to oppose either universal suffrage and compulsory primary education or a war *really* fought to safeguard political freedom against attempts to abolish it!

Up to the 1914-16 war Karl Kautsky was a Marxist, and many of his major writings and statements will always remain models of Marxism. On August 26, 1910, he wrote in *Die Neue Zeit*, in reference to the imminent war:

"In a war between Germany and England the issue is not democracy, but world domination, i.e., exploitation of the world. That is not an issue on which Social-Democrats can side with the exploiters of their nation" (*Neue Zeit*, 28. Jahrg., Bd. 2, S. 776).

There you have an excellent Marxist formulation, one that fully coincides with our own and fully exposes the *present-day* Kautsky, who has turned from Marxism to defence of social-chauvinism. It is a formulation (we shall have occasion to revert to it in other articles) that clearly brings out the principles underlying the Marxist attitude towards war. War is the continuation of policy. Hence, once there is a struggle for democracy, a war for democracy is *possible*. National self-determination is but one of the democratic demands and does not, in principle, differ from other democratic demands. "World domination" is, to put it briefly, the substance of imperialist policy, of which imperialist war is the continuation. Rejection of "defence of the fatherland" in a democratic war, i.e., rejecting participation in such a war, is an absurdity that has nothing in common with Marxism. To em-

bellish imperialist war by applying to it the concept of "defence of the fatherland", i.e., by presenting it as a democratic war, is to deceive the workers and side with the reactionary bourgeoisie.

## 2. "Our Understanding of the New Era"

The heading is Kievsky's. He constantly speaks of a "new era", but here, too, unfortunately his arguments are erroneous.

Our Party resolutions speak of the present war as stemming from the general conditions of the imperialist era. We give a correct Marxist definition of the relation between the "era" and the "present war": Marxism requires a concrete assessment of each separate war. To understand why an imperialist war, i.e., a war thoroughly reactionary and anti-democratic in its political implications, could, and inevitably did, break out between the Great Powers, many of whom stood at the head of the struggle for democracy in 1789-1871—to understand this we must understand the general conditions of the imperialist era, i.e., the transformation of capitalism in the advanced countries into imperialism.

Kievsky has flagrantly distorted the relation between the "era" and the "present war". In his reasoning, to consider the matter *concretely* means to examine the "era". That is precisely where he is wrong.

The era 1789-1871 was of special significance for Europe. That is irrefutable. We cannot understand a single national liberation war, and such wars were especially typical of that period, unless we understand the general conditions of the period. Does that mean that *all* wars of that period were national liberation wars? Certainly not. To hold that view is to reduce the whole thing to an absurdity and apply a ridiculous stereotype in place of a concrete analysis of each separate war. There were also colonial wars in 1789-1871, and wars between reactionary empires that oppressed many nations.

Advanced European (and American) capitalism has entered a new era of imperialism. Does it follow from that that only imperialist wars are now possible? Any such contention would be absurd. It would reveal inability to distinguish a given concrete phenomenon from the sum total of variegated phenomena possible in a given era. An era is called an era precisely because it encompasses the sum total of variegated phenomena and wars, typical and untypical, big and small, some peculiar to advanced countries, others to backward countries. To brush aside these concrete questions by resorting to general phrases about the "era", as Kievsky does, is to abuse the very concept "era". And to prove that, we shall cite one example out of many. But first it should be noted that *one* group of Lefts, namely, the German *Internationale* group, has advanced this manifestly erroneous proposition in § 5 of its theses, published in No. 3 of the *Bulletin of the Berne Executive Committee* (February 29, 1916): "National wars *are no longer possible* in the era of this unbridled imperialism." We analysed that statement in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*. Here we need merely note that though everyone who has followed the internationalist movement is long acquainted with this theoretical proposition (we opposed it way back in the spring of 1916 at the extended meeting of the Berne Executive Committee), *not a single group* has repeated or accepted it. And there is not a single word in the spirit of this or any similar proposition in Kievsky's article, written in August 1916.

That should be noted, and for the following reason: if this or a similar theoretical proposition were advanced, then we could speak of theoretical divergencies. But since *no* such proposition has been advanced, we are constrained to say: what we have is not a different interpretation of the concept "era", not a theoretical divergency, but merely a carelessly uttered phrase, merely abuse of the word "era".

Here is an example. Kievsky starts his article by asking: "Is not this (self-determination) the same as the right to receive free of charge

10,000 acres of land on Mars? The question can be answered only in the most concrete manner, only in context with the nature of the present era. The right of nations to self-determination is one thing in the era of the formation of national states, as the best form of developing the productive forces at their then existing level, but it is quite another thing now that this form, the national state, fetters the development of the productive forces. A vast distance separates the era of the establishment of capitalism and the national state from the era of the collapse of the national state and the eve of the collapse of capitalism itself. To discuss things in 'general', out of context with time and space, does not befit a Marxist."

There you have a sample of caricaturing the concept "imperialist era". And its caricature must be fought precisely because it is a new and important concept! What do we mean when we say that national states have become fetters, etc.? We have in mind the advanced capitalist countries, above all Germany, France, England, whose participation in the present war has been the chief factor in making it an imperialist war. In *these* countries, which hitherto have been in the van of mankind, particularly in 1789-1871, the process of forming national states has been consummated. In *these* countries the national movement is a thing of an irrevocable past, and it would be an absurd reactionary utopia to try to revive it. The national movement of the French, English, Germans has long been completed. In *these* countries history's next step is a different one: liberated nations have become transformed into oppressor nations, into nations of imperialist rapine, nations that are going through the "eve of the collapse of capitalism".

But what of other nations?

Kievsky repeats, like a rule learned by rote, that Marxists should approach things "concretely", but he does *not* apply that rule. In our theses\*, on the other hand, we deliberately

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\* The reference is to the theses "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination" written by Lenin in January and February 1916 and published under the signature of the Editorial Board of *Sotsial-Demokrat* in the magazine *Vorboke* No. 2, in April 1916.—Ed.



gave an example of a concrete approach, and Kievsky did not wish to point out our mistake, if he found one.

Our theses (§6) state that to be concrete not less than *three* different types of countries must be distinguished when dealing with self-determination. (It was clearly impossible to discuss each separate country in general theses.) First type: the advanced countries of Western Europe (and America), where the national movement is a thing of the *past*. Second type: Eastern Europe, where it is a thing of the *present*. Third type: semi-colonies and colonies, where it is largely a thing of the *future*.

Is this correct or not? *This* is what Kievsky should have levelled his criticism at. But he does not see the *essence* of the theoretical problems! He fails to see that unless he refutes the above-mentioned proposition (in § 6) of our theses—and it cannot be refuted because it is correct—his disquisitions about the “era” resemble a man brandishing his sword but striking no blows.

“In contrast to V. Ilyin’s\* opinion,” he writes at the end of his article, “we assume that for the majority (!) of Western (!) countries the national problem has not been settled . . .”

And so, the national movements of the French, Spaniards, English, Dutch, Germans and Italians were not consummated in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and earlier? At the beginning of the article the concept “era of imperialism” is distorted to make it appear that the national movement has been consummated in general, and not only in the advanced Western countries. At the end of the same article the “national problem” is declared “not settled” in *precisely* the Western countries!! Is that not a muddle?

In the Western countries the national movement is a thing of the distant past. In England, France, Germany, etc., the

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\* U. Ilyin—a pen-name of V. I. Lenin.—Ed.

"fatherland" is a dead letter, it has played its historical role, *i.e.*, the national movement cannot yield here anything progressive, anything that will elevate new masses to a new economic and political life. History's next step here is not transition from feudalism or from patriarchal savagery to national progress, to a cultured and politically free fatherland, but transition from a "fatherland" that has outlived its day, that is capitalistically overripe, to socialism.

The position is different in Eastern Europe. As far as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, for instance, are concerned only a Martian dreamer could deny that the national movement has not yet been consummated there, that the awakening of the masses to the full use of their mother tongue and literature (and this is an absolute condition and concomitant of the full development of capitalism, of the full penetration of exchange to the very last peasant family) is *still* going on there. The "fatherland" is historically not *yet* quite a dead letter there. There the "defence of the fatherland" can *still* be defence of democracy, of one's native language, of political liberty against oppressor nations, against medievalism, whereas the English, French, Germans and Italians lie when they speak of defending their fatherland in the present war, because actually what they are defending is *not* their native language, *not* their right to national development, but their rights as slave-holders, their colonies, the foreign "spheres of influence" of their finance capital, etc.

In the semi-colonies and colonies the national movement is, historically, still younger than in Eastern Europe.

*What* do the words "advanced countries" and imperialist era refer to? In *what* lies the "special" position of Russia (heading of §e in the second chapter of Kievsky's article), and not only Russia? *Where* is the national liberation movement a false phrase and *where* is it a living and progressive reality? Kievsky reveals no understanding on any of these points.

### 3. What Is Economic Analysis?

Central to all the disquisitions of the self-determination opponents is the claim that it is generally "unachievable" under capitalism or imperialism. The word "unachievable" is frequently used in widely different and inaccurately defined meanings. That is why in our theses we insisted on what is essential in any theoretical discussion: an explanation of what is meant by "unachievable". Nor did we confine ourselves to that. We tried to give such an explanation. *All* democratic demands are "unachievable" under imperialism in the sense that politically they are hard to achieve or totally unachievable without a series of revolutions.

It is fundamentally wrong, however, to maintain that self-determination is unachievable in the economic sense.

That has been our contention. It is the pivotal point of our theoretical differences, a question to which our opponents in any serious discussion should have paid due attention.

But just see how Kievsky treats the question.

He definitely rejects unachievable as meaning "hard to achieve" politically. He gives a direct answer in the sense of economic unachievability.

"Does this mean," Kievsky writes, "that self-determination under imperialism is just as unachievable as labour money under commodity production?" And he replies: "Yes, it means exactly that. For what we are discussing is the logical contradiction between two social categories: 'imperialism' and 'self-determination of nations', the same logical contradiction as that between two other categories: labour money and commodity production. Imperialism is the negation of self-determination, and no magician can reconcile the two."

Frightening as is the angry word "magician" Kievsky hurls at us, we must nevertheless point out that he simply fails to understand what economic analysis implies. There should be no "logical contradiction"—providing, of course, that there is proper logical thinking—*either* in an economic *or* political analysis. Hence, to plead a "logical contradiction" *in general* when what we are discussing is economic and *not*

political analysis, is completely irrelevant. *Both* economic and political phenomena come within "social categories". Consequently, having first replied directly and definitely: "Yes, it means exactly that" (i.e., self-determination is *just* as unachievable as labour money under commodity production), Kievsky dismisses the whole matter by beating about the bush, without offering any economic analysis.

How do we prove that labour money is unachievable under commodity production? By economic analysis. And economic analysis, like every other, rules out "logical contradictions", takes economic and *only* economic categories (and not "social categories" in general) and from them concludes that labour money is unachievable. In the first chapter of *Capital* there is no mention whatever of politics, or political forms, or "social categories": the analysis applies *only* to economic phenomena, commodity exchange, its development. Economic analysis shows—needless to say, through "logical" arguments—that under commodity production labour money is unachievable.

Kievsky does not even attempt anything approximating an economic analysis! He *confuses* the economic substance of imperialism with its political tendencies, as is obvious from the very first phrase of the very first paragraph of his article. Here is that phrase:

"Industrial capital is the synthesis of pre-capitalist production and merchant-usurer capital. Usurer capital becomes the servant of industrial capital. Then capitalism subjects the various forms of capital and there emerges its highest, unified type—finance capital. The whole era can therefore be designated as the era of finance capital of which imperialism is the corresponding foreign-policy system."

Economically, that definition is absolutely worthless: instead of precise economic categories we get mere phrases. However, it is impossible to dwell on that now. The important thing is that Kievsky proclaims imperialism to be a "foreign-policy system".

First, this is, essentially, a wrong repetition of Kautsky's wrong idea.

Second, it is a purely political, and only political, definition of imperialism. By defining imperialism as a "system of policy" Kievsky wants to avoid the *economic* analysis he promised to give when he declared that self-determination was "*just as*" unachievable, i.e., economically unachievable, under imperialism as labour money under commodity production!\*

In his controversy with the Lefts, Kautsky declared that imperialism was "merely a system of foreign *policy*" (namely, annexation), and that it would be wrong to describe as imperialism a definite economic stage, or level, in the development of capitalism.

Kautsky is wrong. Of course, it is not proper to argue about words. You cannot prohibit the use of the "word" imperialism in this sense or any other. But if you want to conduct a discussion you must define your terms precisely.

Economically, imperialism (or the "era" of finance capital—it is not a matter of words) is the highest stage in the development of capitalism, one in which production has assumed such big, immense proportions that *free competition gives way to monopoly*. That is the *economic* essence of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in trusts, syndicates, etc., in the omnipotence of the giant banks, in the buying up of raw material sources, etc., in the concentration of banking capital, etc. Everything hinges on economic monopoly.

The political superstructure of this new economy, of monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism) is the change *from* democracy to political reaction. Democracy corresponds to free competition. Political reaction corresponds

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\* Is Kievsky aware of the impolite word Marx used in reference to such "logical methods"? *Without applying* this impolite term to Kievsky, we nevertheless are obliged to remark that Marx described such methods as "fraudulent": arbitrarily inserting precisely what is at issue, precisely what has to be proved, in *defining* a concept.

We repeat, we do *not* apply Marx's impolite expression to Kievsky. We merely disclose the source of his mistake. (In the manuscript this passage is crossed out.—Ed.)

to monopoly. "Finance capital strives for domination, not freedom," Rudolf Hilferding rightly remarks in his *Finance Capital*.

It is fundamentally wrong, un-Marxist and unscientific, to single out "foreign policy" from policy in general, let alone counterpose foreign policy to home policy. Both in foreign and home policy imperialism strives towards violations of democracy, towards reaction. In this sense imperialism is indisputably the "negation" of *democracy in general*, of *all democracy*, and not just of *one* of its demands, national self-determination.

Being a "negation" of democracy in general, imperialism is *also* a "negation" of democracy in the national question (i.e., national self-determination): it seeks to violate democracy. The achievement of democracy is, in the same sense, and to the same degree, harder under imperialism (compared with pre-monopoly capitalism), as the achievement of a republic, a militia, popular election of officials, etc. There can be no talk of democracy being "economically" unachievable.

Kievsky was probably led astray here by the fact (besides his general lack of understanding of the requirements of economic analysis) that the philistine regards annexation (i.e., acquisition of foreign territories against the will of their people, i.e., violation of self-determination) as equivalent to the "spread" (expansion) of finance capital to a larger economic territory.

But theoretical problems should not be approached from philistine conceptions.

Economically, imperialism is monopoly capitalism. To acquire full monopoly, all competition must be eliminated, and not only on the home market (of the given state), but also on foreign markets, in the whole world. Is it *economically* possible, "in the era of finance capital", to eliminate competition even in a foreign state? Certainly it is. It is done through a rival's financial dependence and acquisition of his sources of raw materials and eventually of all his enterprises.

The American trusts are the supreme expression of the economy of imperialism or monopoly capitalism. They do not confine themselves to economic means of eliminating rivals, but constantly resort to political, even criminal, methods. It would be the greatest mistake, however, to believe that the trusts cannot establish their monopoly by purely economic methods. Reality provides ample proof that this is "achievable": the trusts undermine their rivals' credit through the banks (the owners of the trusts become the owners of the banks: buying up shares); their supply of materials (the owners of the trusts become the owners of the railways: buying up shares); for a certain time the trusts sell below cost, spending millions on this in order to ruin a competitor and then *buy up* his enterprises, his sources of raw materials (mines, land, etc.).

There you have a purely economic analysis of the power of the trusts and their expansion. There you have the purely economic path to expansion: *buying up* mills and factories, sources of raw materials.

Big finance capital of one country can always buy up competitors in another, politically independent country and constantly does so. Economically, this is fully achievable. Economic "annexation" is *fully* "achievable" without political annexation and is widely practised. In the literature on imperialism you will constantly come across indications that Argentina, for example, is in reality a "trade colony" of Britain, or that Portugal is in reality a "vassal" of Britain, etc. And that is actually so: economic dependence upon British banks, indebtedness to Britain, British acquisition of their railways, mines, land, etc., enable Britain to "annex" these countries economically without violating their political independence.

National self-determination means political independence. Imperialism seeks to violate such independence because political annexation often makes economic annexation easier, cheaper (easier to bribe officials, secure concessions, put through advantageous legislation, etc.), more convenient, less

troublesome—just as imperialism seeks to replace democracy generally by oligarchy. But to speak of the *economic* “un-achievability” of self-determination under imperialism is sheer nonsense.

Kievsky gets round the theoretical difficulties by a very simple and superficial dodge, known in German as “*burschikose*” phraseology, i.e., primitive, crude phrases heard (and quite naturally) at student binges. Here is an example:

“Universal suffrage,” he writes, “the eight-hour day and even the republic are *logically* compatible with imperialism, though imperialism far from smiles [!!] on them, and their achievement is therefore extremely difficult.”

We would have absolutely no objections to the *burschikose* statement that imperialism far from “smiles” on the republic—a frivolous word can sometimes lend colour to a scientific polemic!—if in this polemic on a serious issue we were given, *in addition*, an economic and political analysis of the concepts involved. With Kievsky, however, the *burschikose* phrase does duty for such an analysis or serves to conceal lack of it.

What can this mean: “Imperialism far from smiles on the republic”? And, why?

The republic is one possible form of the political superstructure of capitalist society, and, moreover, under present-day conditions the most democratic form. To say that imperialism does not “smile” on the republic is to say that there is a contradiction between imperialism and democracy. It may very well be that Kievsky does not “smile” or even “far from smiles” on this conclusion. Nevertheless it is irrefutable.

To continue. What is the nature of this contradiction between imperialism and democracy? Is it a logical or illogical contradiction? Kievsky uses the word “logical” without stopping to think and therefore does not notice that in this particular case it serves to *conceal* (both from the reader’s and author’s eyes and mind) the *very question* he sets out to



discuss! That question is the relation of economics to politics: the relation of economic conditions and the economic content of imperialism to a certain political form. To say that every "contradiction" revealed in human discussion is a logical contradiction is meaningless tautology. And with the aid of this tautology Kievsky evades the *substance* of the question: Is it a "logical" contradiction between two *economic* phenomena or propositions (1)? Or two *political* phenomena or propositions (2)? Or *economic* and *political* phenomena or propositions (3)?

For that is the heart of the matter, once we are discussing economic unachievability or achievability under one or another political form!

Had Kievsky not evaded the heart of the matter, he would probably have realised that the contradiction between imperialism and the republic is a contradiction between the economics of latter-day capitalism (namely, monopoly capitalism) and political democracy in general. For Kievsky will never prove that any major and fundamental democratic measure (popular election of officials or officers, complete freedom of association and assembly, etc.) is less contradictory to imperialism (or, if you like, more "smiled" upon) than the republic.

What we have, then, is the proposition *we* advanced in our theses: imperialism contradicts, "logically" contradicts, *all* political democracy *in general*. Kievsky does not "smile" on this proposition for it demolishes all his illogical constructions. But what can we do about it? Are we to accept a method that is supposed to refute certain propositions, but instead secretly advances them by using such expressions as "imperialism far from smiles on the republic"?

Further. Why does imperialism far from smile on the republic? And how does imperialism "combine" its economic system with the republic?

Kievsky has given no thought to that. We would remind him of the following words of Engels in reference to the democratic republic. Can wealth dominate under this form of

government? The question concerns the "contradiction" between economics and politics.

Engels replies: "The democratic republic officially knows nothing any more of property distinctions [between citizens]. In it, wealth exercises its power indirectly, but all the more surely. On the one hand, in the form of the direct corruption of officials, of which America provides the classical example; on the other hand, in the form of an alliance between government and stock exchange. . . ."\*

There you have an excellent example of economic analysis on the question of the "achievability" of democracy under capitalism. And the "achievability" of self-determination under imperialism is part of that question.

The democratic republic "logically" contradicts capitalism, because "officially" it puts the rich and the poor on an equal footing. That is a contradiction between the economic system and the political superstructure. There is the same contradiction between imperialism and the republic, deepened or aggravated by the fact that the change-over from free competition to monopoly makes the realisation of political freedoms even more "difficult".

How, then, is capitalism reconciled with democracy? By indirect implementation of the omnipotence of capital. There are two economic means for that: (1) direct bribery; (2) alliance of government and stock exchange. (That is stated in our theses—under a bourgeois system finance capital "can freely bribe and buy any government and any official".)

Once we have the dominance of commodity production, of the bourgeoisie, of the power of money—bribery (direct or through the stock exchange) is "achievable" under any form of government and under any kind of democracy.

What, it can be asked, is altered in this respect when capitalism gives way to imperialism, i.e., when pre-monopoly capitalism is replaced by monopoly capitalism?

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\* See Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Ch. IX.—Ed.

Only that the power of the stock exchange increases. For finance capital is industrial capital at its highest, monopoly level which has merged with banking capital. The big banks merge with and absorb the stock exchange. (The literature on imperialism speaks of the declining role of the stock exchange, but only in the sense that every giant bank is itself virtually a stock exchange.)

Further. If "wealth" in general is fully capable of achieving domination over any democratic republic by bribery and through the stock exchange, then how can Kievsky maintain, without lapsing into a very curious "logical contradiction", that the immense wealth of the trusts and the banks, which have thousands of millions at their command, cannot "achieve" the domination of finance capital over a foreign, i.e., politically independent, republic??

Well? Bribery of officials is "unachievable" in a foreign state? Or the "alliance of government and stock exchange" applies only to one's own government?

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The reader will already have seen that it requires roughly ten pages of print to untangle and popularly explain ten lines of confusion. We cannot examine every one of Kievsky's arguments in the same detail. And there is not a single one that is not confused. Nor is there really any need for this once the main arguments have been examined. The rest will be dealt with briefly.

#### 4. The Example of Norway

Norway "achieved" the supposedly unachievable right to self-determination in 1905, in the era of the most rampant imperialism. It is therefore not only absurd, but ludicrous, from the theoretical standpoint, to speak of "unachievability".

Kievsky wants to refute that by angrily calling us "rationalists". (What has that to do with it? The rationalist con-

fines himself to purely abstract disquisitions, while we have pointed to a very concrete fact! But perhaps Kievsky is using the foreign word "rationalist" in the same... how to put it more mildly?... in the same "unhappy" manner he used the word "extractive" at the beginning of his article, when he presented his arguments "in extractive form"?)

Kievsky reproaches us. For us, he says, "the important thing is the appearance of phenomena rather than the real substance". Well, let us examine the real substance.

His refutation begins with this example: enactment of a law against trusts does not prove that their prohibition is unachievable. True enough. But the example is an unhappy one, for it militates *against* Kievsky. Laws are political measures, politics. No political measure can prohibit economic phenomena. Whatever political form Poland adopts, whether she be part of tsarist Russia or Germany, or an autonomous region, or a politically independent state, there is no prohibiting or repealing her dependence on the finance capital of the imperialist powers, or preventing that capital from buying up the shares of her industries.

The independence Norway "achieved" in 1905 was only political. It could not affect its economic dependence, nor was this the intention. That is exactly the point made in our theses. We indicated that self-determination concerns only politics, and it would therefore be wrong even to raise the question of its economic unachievability. But here is Kievsky "refuting" this by citing an example of political bans being powerless against the economy! What a "refutation"!

To proceed.

"One or even many instances of small-scale industry prevailing over large-scale industry is not sufficient to refute Marx's correct proposition that the general development of capitalism is attended by the concentration and centralisation of production."

Again, the argument is based on an unfortunate *example*, chosen to divert the attention (of the reader and the author) from the substance of the issue.

We maintain that it would be wrong to speak of the economic unachievability of self-determination in the same sense as we speak of the unachievability of labour money under capitalism. Not a single "example" of *such* achievability can be cited. Kievsky tacitly admits we are correct on this point when he shifts to *another* interpretation of "unachievability".

Why does he not do so directly? Why does he not openly and precisely formulate *his* proposition: "self-determination, while unachievable in the sense of its economical possibility under capitalism, contradicts development and is therefore either reactionary or merely an exception"?

He does not do so because a clear formulation of this counter-proposition would immediately expose its author, and he therefore tries to conceal it.

The law of economic concentration, of the victory of large-scale production over small, is recognised in our own and the Erfurt programmes. Kievsky conceals the fact that nowhere is the law of political or state concentration recognised. If it were the same kind of law—if there were such a law—then why should not Kievsky formulate it and suggest that it be added to our programme? Is it right for him to leave us with a bad, incomplete programme, considering that he has discovered this new law of state concentration, which is of practical significance since it would rid our programme of erroneous conclusions?

Kievsky does not formulate that law, does not suggest that it be added to our programme, because he has the hazy feeling that if he did he would be making himself a laughing-stock. Everyone would laugh at this amusing imperialist Economism if it were expressed openly and if, parallel with the law that small-scale production is ousted by large-scale production, there were presented another "*law*" (connected with the first or existing side by side with it) of small states being ousted by big ones!

To explain this we shall put only one question to Kievsky: Why is it that economists (without quotation marks) do *not* speak of the "disintegration" of the modern trusts or

big banks? Or of the possibility and achievability of such disintegration? Why is it that even the "imperialist Economist" (in quotation marks) is obliged to admit that the disintegration of big states is both possible and achievable, and not only in general, but, for example, the secession of "small nationalities" (please note!) from Russia (see, Chapter II of Kievsky's article)?

Lastly, to show even more clearly the lengths to which our author goes, and to warn him, let us note the following: We all accept the law of large-scale production ousting small-scale production, but no one is afraid to describe a specific "instance" of "small-scale industry prevailing over large-scale industry" as a reactionary phenomenon. No opponent of self-determination has yet ventured to describe as reactionary Norway's secession from Sweden, though we raised the question in our literature as early as 1914.

Large-scale production is unachievable if, for instance, hand-worked machines remain. The idea of a mechanical factory "disintegrating" into handicrafts production is utterly absurd. The imperialist tendency towards big empires is fully achievable, and in practice is often achieved, in the form of an imperialist alliance of sovereign and independent—politically independent—states. Such an alliance is possible and is encountered not only in the form of an economic merger of the finance capital of two countries, but also in the form of military "co-operation" in an imperialist war. National struggle, national insurrection, national secession are fully "achievable" and are met with in practice *under* imperialism. They are even more pronounced, for imperialism does not halt the development of capitalism and the growth of democratic tendencies among the mass of the population. On the contrary, it *accentuates* the antagonism between their democratic aspirations and the anti-democratic tendency of the trusts.

It is only from the point of view of imperialist Economism, i.e., caricaturised Marxism, that one can ignore, for instance, this specific aspect of imperialist policy: on the one hand,

the present imperialist war offers examples of how the force of financial ties and economic interests draws a small, politically independent state into the struggle of the Great Powers (Britain and Portugal). On the other hand, the violation of democracy with regard to small nations, much weaker (both economically and politically) than their imperialist "patrons", leads either to revolt (Ireland) or to defection of whole regiments to the enemy (the Czechs). In this situation it is not only "achievable", from the point of view of finance capital, but *sometimes even profitable* for the trusts, for *their* imperialist policy, for *their* imperialist war, to allow *individual* small nations as much democratic freedom as they can, right down to political independence, so as not to risk damaging their "own" military operations. To overlook the peculiarity of political and strategic relationships and to repeat indiscriminately a word learned by rote, "imperialism", is anything but Marxism.

On Norway, Kievsky tells us, firstly, that she "had always been an independent state". That is not true and can only be explained by the author's *burschikose* carelessness and his disregard of political issues. Norway was *not* an independent state prior to 1905, though she enjoyed a very large measure of autonomy. Sweden recognised Norway's political independence only *after* her secession. If Norway "had always been an independent state", then the Swedish Government would not have informed the other powers, on October 26, 1905, that it recognised Norway's independence.

Secondly, Kievsky cites a number of statements to prove that Norway looked to the West, and Sweden to the East, that in one country mainly British, and in the other German, finance capital was "at work", etc. From this he draws the triumphant conclusion: "This example [Norway] neatly fits into our pattern."

There you have a sample of the logic of imperialist Economism! Our theses point out that finance capital can dominate in "any", "even independent country", and all the arguments about self-determination being "unachievable" from

the point of view of finance capital are therefore sheer confusion. We are given data *confirming* our proposition about the part foreign finance capital played in Norway *before* and *after* her secession. And these data are supposed to *refute* our proposition!

Dilating on finance capital in order to *disregard* political issues—is that the way to discuss politics?

No. Political issues do not disappear because of Economism's faulty logic. British finance capital was "at work" in Norway before and after secession. German finance capital was "at work" in Poland prior to her secession from Russia and will continue to "work" there *no matter* what political status Poland enjoys. That is so elementary that it is embarrassing to have to repeat it. But what can one do if the ABC is forgotten?

Does this dispense with the political question of Norway's status? With her having been part of Sweden? With the attitude of the workers when the secession issue arose?

Kievsky evades these questions because they hit hard at the Economists. But these questions were posed, and are posed, by life itself. Life itself posed the question: Could a Swedish worker who did not recognise Norway's right to secession remain a member of the Social-Democratic Party? *He could not.*

The Swedish aristocrats wanted a war against Norway, and so did the clericals. That fact does not disappear because Kievsky has "forgotten" to read about it in the history of the Norwegian people. The Swedish worker could, while remaining a Social-Democrat, urge the Norwegians to vote against secession (the Norwegian referendum on secession, held on August 13, 1905, resulted in 368,200 votes for secession and 184 against, with about 80 per cent of the electorate taking part). But the Swedish worker who, like the Swedish aristocracy and bourgeoisie, would deny the Norwegians the right to decide this question themselves, without the Swedes and irrespective of their will, would have been a *social-chauvinist*



and a miscreant the Social-Democratic Party could not tolerate in its ranks.

That is how §9 of our Party Programme should be applied. But our imperialist Economist tries to *jump over* this clause. You cannot jump over it, gentlemen, without falling into the embrace of chauvinism!

And what of the Norwegian worker? Was it his duty, from the internationalist point of view, to vote *for* secession? Certainly not. He could have voted against secession and remained a Social-Democrat. He would have been betraying his duty as a member of the Social-Democratic Party only if he had proffered a helping hand to a Black-Hundred Swedish worker opposed to Norway's *freedom* of secession.

Some people refuse to see this elementary difference in the position of the Norwegian and Swedish worker. But they expose themselves when they *evade* this most concrete of political questions, which we squarely put to them. They remain silent, try to wriggle out and in that way surrender their position.

To prove that the "Norwegian" issue can arise in Russia, we deliberately advanced this proposition: in circumstances of a *purely* military and strategic nature a separate Polish state is fully achievable even *now*. Kievsky wants to "discuss" that—and remains silent!

Let us add this: Finland too, out of *purely* military and strategic considerations, and given a certain outcome of the *present* imperialist war (for instance, Sweden joining the Germans and the latter's semi-victory), *can* become a separate state without undermining the "achievability" of even a single operation of finance capital, without making "unachievable" the buying up of Finnish railway and industrial shares.\*

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\* Given one outcome of the present war, the formation of new states in Europe (Polish, Finnish, etc.) is fully "achievable" without in any way disturbing the conditions for the development of imperialism and its power. On the contrary, this would *increase* the influence, contacts and pressure of finance capital. But given another outcome, the

Kievsky seeks salvation from unpleasant political issues in an amazing phrase which is amazingly characteristic of all his "arguments": "At any moment...[that is literally what he says at the end of §c, Chapter I] the Sword of Damocles can strike and put an end to the existence of an 'independent' workshop" (a "hint" at little Sweden and Norway).

That, presumably, is genuine Marxism: a separate Norwegian state, whose secession from Sweden the *Swedish* Government described as a "revolutionary measure", has been in existence only some ten years. Is there any point in examining the *political* issues that follow from this if we have read Hilferding's *Finance Capital* and "understood" it in the sense that "at any moment"—if we are to exaggerate then let's go the whole hog!—a small state might vanish? Is there any point in drawing attention to the fact that we have perverted Marxism into Economism, and that we have turned our policy into a rehash of the speeches of case-hardened Russian chauvinists?

What a mistake the Russian workers must have made in 1905 in seeking a republic: finance capital had already been mobilised against it in France, England, etc., and "at any moment" the "Sword of Damocles" could have struck it down, if it had ever come into being!

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"The demand for national self-determination is not... utopian in the minimum programme: it does not contradict social development, inasmuch as its achievement would

formation of new states of Hungary, Czechia, etc., is *likewise* "achievable". The British imperialists are already planning this second outcome in anticipation of their victory. The imperialist era does not destroy either the striving for national political independence or its "achievability" *within the bounds* of world imperialist relationships. *Outside* these bounds, however, a republican Russia, or in general any major democratic transformations anywhere else in the world are "unachievable" without a series of revolutions and are unstable without socialism. Kievsky has wholly and completely failed to understand the relation of imperialism to democracy.

not halt that development." That passage from Martov is challenged by Kievsky in the section in which he cites the "statements" about Norway. They *prove*, again and again, the generally known fact that Norway's "self-determination" and secession *did not halt either* the development generally, *or* expansion of the operation of finance capital in particular, *or* the buying up of Norway by the English!

There have been Bolsheviks among us, Alexinsky in 1908-10, for instance, who argued with Martov *precisely at a time* when Martov was right! God save us from such "allies"!

### 5. "Monism and Dualism"

Reproaching us for "interpreting the demand dualistically", P. Kievsky writes:

"Monistic *action* of the International is replaced by dualistic *propaganda*."

That sounds quite Marxist and materialistic: monistic action is contrasted to "dualistic" propaganda. Unfortunately, closer examination reveals that it is *verbal* "monism", like the "monism" of Dühring. "If I include a shoe brush in the *unity* mammals," Engels wrote exposing Dühring's "monism", "this does not help it to get mammary glands."

This means that only such things, qualities, phenomena and actions that are *a unity* in objective reality can be *declared* "a unity". It is this "*detail*" that our author overlooks!

He thinks we are "dualists", first, because what we demand, primarily, of the workers of the oppressed nations—this refers to the national question only—*differs* from what we demand of the workers of the oppressor nations.

To determine whether P. Kievsky's "monism" is the same as Dühring's, let us examine *objective realities*.

Is the *actual* condition of the workers in the oppressor and in the oppressed nations the same, from the standpoint of the national question?

No, it is not the same.

(1) Economically, the difference is that sections of the working class in the oppressor nations receive crumbs from the *superprofits* the bourgeoisie of these nations obtains by extra exploitation of the workers of the oppressed nations. Besides, economic statistics show that here a *larger* percentage of the workers become "straw bosses" than is the case in the oppressed nations, a *larger* percentage rise to the labour *aristocracy*.<sup>\*</sup> That is a fact. To a *certain degree* the workers of the oppressor nations are partners of *their own* bourgeoisie in plundering the workers (and the mass of the population) of the oppressed nations.

(2) *Politically*, the difference is that, compared with the workers of the oppressed nations, they occupy a *privileged* position in many spheres of political life.

(3) *Ideologically*, or spiritually, the difference is that they are taught, at school and in life, disdain and contempt for the workers of the oppressed nations. This has been *experienced*, for example, by every Great Russian who has been brought up or who has lived among Great Russians.

Thus, *all along the line* there are differences in objective reality, i.e., "dualism" in the objective world that is independent of the will and consciousness of individuals.

That being so, how are we to regard P. Kievsky's assertion about the "monistic action of the International"?

It is a hollow, high-sounding phrase, no more.

In *real life* the International is composed of workers *divided* into oppressor and oppressed nations. *If* its action is *to be monistic*, its propaganda must *not be the same* for both. That is how we should regard the matter in the light of real (not Dühringian) "monism", Marxist materialism.

An example? We cited the example of Norway (in the legal press over two years ago!), and no one has challenged it. In this concrete case taken from life, the *action* of the Norwegian and Swedish workers was "monistic", unified, interna-

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<sup>\*</sup> See, for instance, Hourwich's book on immigration and the condition of the working class in America, *Immigration and Labour*.—Ed.

tionalist *only* because and insofar as the Swedish workers *unconditionally* championed Norway's freedom to secede, while the Norwegian workers raised the question of secession *only conditionally*. Had the Swedish workers not supported Norway's freedom of secession *unconditionally*, they would have been *chauvinists*, accomplices of the chauvinist Swedish landlords, who wanted to "keep" Norway by force, by war. Had the Norwegian workers *not* raised the question of secession *conditionally*, i.e., allowing even Social-Democratic Party members to conduct propaganda and vote against secession, they would have failed in their internationalist duty and would have sunk to narrow, *bourgeois* Norwegian nationalism. Why? Because the secession was being effected by the *bourgeoisie*, not by the proletariat! Because the Norwegian bourgeoisie (as every other) *always* strives to drive a wedge between the workers of its own and an "alien" country! Because for the class-conscious workers every democratic demand (including self-determination) is *subordinated* to the supreme interests of socialism. For example, if Norway's secession from Sweden had created the certainty or probability of war between Britain and Germany, the Norwegian workers, *for that reason alone*, would have had to oppose secession. The Swedish workers would have had the right and the opportunity, without ceasing to be socialists, to agitate against secession, but *only* if they had waged a systematic, consistent and constant struggle *against* the Swedish Government for Norway's *freedom* to secede. Otherwise the Norwegian workers and people *would not*, and *could not*, accept the advice of the Swedish workers as sincere.

The trouble with the opponents of self-determination is that they confine themselves to lifeless abstractions, *fearing* to analyse to the end a single concrete real-life instance. Our concrete statement in the theses that a new Polish state is quite "achievable" *now*, given a definite combination of purely military, strategic conditions, has not been challenged either by the Poles or by P. Kievsky. But no one wanted to *ponder* the conclusions that follow from this tacit admission

that we were right. And what follows, obviously, is that internationalist propaganda *cannot* be the same for the Russians and the Poles if it is to educate both for "monistic action". The Great-Russian (and German) worker is in duty bound unconditionally to insist on Poland's freedom to secede; otherwise he will, *in fact, now* be the lackey of Nicholas II or Hindenburg. The Polish worker *could* insist on secession *only* conditionally, because to speculate (as do the Fracy\*) on the victory of one or the other imperialist bourgeoisie is tantamount to becoming *its* lackey. Failure to understand this difference, which is a prerequisite for "monistic action" of the International, is about the same as failing to understand why "monistic action" against the tsarist army near Moscow, say, requires that the revolutionary forces march west from Nizhni-Novgorod and east from Smolensk.

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Second, our new exponent of Dühringian monism reproaches us for not striving to achieve "the closest organisational unity of the various national sections of the International" in the event of a social revolution.

Under socialism, P. Kievsky writes, self-determination becomes superfluous, since the state itself ceases to exist. That is meant as an argument against us! But in our theses we clearly and definitely say, in *three* lines, the last three lines of section one, that "democracy, too, is a form of state which must disappear when the state disappears". It is precisely this truism that P. Kievsky repeats—to "refute" us, of course!—on *several pages* of his §r (Chapter I), and repeats it in a *distorted way*. "We picture to ourselves," he writes, "and have always pictured the socialist system as a strictly democratic (!!), centralised system of economy in which the state, as the apparatus for the domination of one part of the population over the other, disappears." This is confu-

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\* *Fracy*—the Right wing of the Polish Socialist Party (P.S.P.), a reformist nationalist party founded in 1892.—Ed.

sion, because democracy *too* is domination "of one part of the population over the other"; it *too* is a form of state. Our author obviously does not understand what is meant by the *withering away* of the state after the victory of socialism and what this process requires.

The main point, however, is his "objections" regarding the era of the social revolution. He calls us "talmudists of self-determination"—what a frightening epithet—and adds: "We picture this process (the social revolution) as the united action of the proletarians of all (!) countries, who wipe out the frontiers of the bourgeois (!) state, who tear down the frontier posts (in addition to "wiping out the frontiers"?), who blow up (!) national unity and establish class unity".

The wrath of this stern judge of the "talmudists" notwithstanding, we must say: there are many words here, but no "ideas".

The social revolution cannot be the united action of the proletarians of *all* countries for the simple reason that most of the countries and the majority of the world's population have not even reached, or have only just reached, the capitalist stage of development. We stated this in section six of our theses, but P. Kievsky, because of lack of attention, or inability to think, did "not notice" that we included this section for a definite purpose, namely, to refute caricature distortions of Marxism. *Only* the advanced countries of Western Europe and North America have matured for socialism, and in Engels' letter to Kautsky (*Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata*) Kievsky will find a concrete illustration of the real and not merely promised "*idea*" that to dream of the "united action of the proletarians of *all* countries" means postponing socialism to the Greek calends, i.e., for ever.\*

Socialism will be achieved by the united action of the proletarians, not of all, but of a minority of countries, those that have reached the *advanced* capitalist stage of development. The cause of Kievsky's error lies in failure to under-

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\* See Engels' letter to Karl Kautsky dated September 12, 1882.—Ed.

stand that. In *these* advanced countries (England, France, Germany, etc.) the national problem was solved long ago; national unity outlived its purpose long ago; *objectively*, there are no "general national tasks" to be accomplished. Hence, only in these countries is it possible *now* to "blow up" national unity and establish class unity.

The undeveloped countries are a different matter. They embrace the whole of Eastern Europe and all the colonies and semi-colonies and are dealt with in section six of the theses (second- and third-type countries). In those areas, as a rule, there *still* exist oppressed and capitalistically undeveloped nations. *Objectively*, these nations still have general national tasks to accomplish, namely, *democratic* tasks, the tasks of *overthrowing foreign oppression*.

Engels cited India as an example of such nations, stating that she might perform a revolution against victorious socialism, for Engels was remote from the preposterous imperialist Economism which imagines that having achieved victory in the advanced countries, the proletariat will "automatically", without definite *democratic* measures, abolish national oppression everywhere. The victorious proletariat will reorganise the countries in which it has triumphed. That cannot be done all at once; or, indeed, can the bourgeoisie be "vanquished" all at once. We deliberately emphasised this in our theses, and Kievsky has again failed to stop and think *why* we stressed this point in connection with the national question.

While the proletariat of the advanced countries is overthrowing the bourgeoisie and repelling its attempts at counter-revolution, the undeveloped and oppressed nations do not just wait, do not cease to exist, do not disappear. If they take advantage even of such a bourgeois imperialist crisis as the war of 1915-16— a minor crisis compared with social revolution—to rise in revolt (the colonies, Ireland), there can be no doubt that they will all the more readily take advantage of the *great crisis* of civil war in the advanced countries to rise in revolt.



The social revolution can come only in the form of an epoch in which are combined civil war by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries and a *whole series* of democratic and revolutionary movements, including the national liberation movement, in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations.

Why? Because capitalism develops unevenly, and objective reality gives us highly developed capitalist nations side by side with a number of economically slightly developed, or totally undeveloped, nations. P. Kievsky has absolutely failed to analyse the *objective* conditions of social revolution from the standpoint of the economic maturity of various countries. His reproach that *we* "invent" instances in which to apply self-determination is therefore an attempt to lay the blame at the wrong door.

With a zeal worthy of a better cause, Kievsky repeatedly quotes Marx and Engels to the effect that "one must not invent things out of his own head, but use his head to discover in the existing material conditions" the means that will free humanity of social evils. When I read those oft-repeated quotations I cannot help recalling the late and unlamented Economists who just as tediously... harped on their "new discovery" that capitalism had triumphed in Russia. Kievsky wants to "smite" us with these quotations: he claims that we invent out of our own heads the conditions for applying self-determination in the epoch of imperialism! But we find the following "incautious admission" in his own article:

"The very fact that we are *opposed* [author's italics] to defence of the fatherland shows most clearly that we will actively resist suppression of a national uprising, for we shall thereby be combating imperialism, our mortal enemy" (Chapter II, § 1).

To criticise an author, to *answer* him, one has to quote in full at least the main propositions of his article. But in all of Kievsky's propositions you will find that every sentence contains two or three errors or illogicalities that distort Marxism!

1) He is unaware that a national uprising is *also* "defence of the fatherland"! A little thought, however, will make it perfectly clear that this is so, since *every* "nation in revolt" "defends" itself, its language, its territory, its fatherland, against the oppressor nation.

All national oppression calls forth the resistance of the *broad masses* of the people; and the resistance of a nationally oppressed population always *tends* to national revolt. Not infrequently (notably in Austria and Russia) we find the bourgeoisie of the oppressed nations *talking* of national revolt, while in practice it enters into reactionary compacts with the bourgeoisie of the oppressor nation behind the backs of, *and against*, its own people. In such cases the criticism of revolutionary Marxists should be directed not against the national movement, but against its degradation, vulgarisation, against the tendency to reduce it to a petty squabble. Incidentally, very many Austrian and Russian Social-Democrats overlook this and in their *legitimate* hatred of the petty, vulgar and sordid national squabbles—disputes and scuffles over the question, for instance, of which language shall have precedence in two-language street signs—refuse to support the national struggle. We shall not "support" a republican farce in, say, the principality of Monaco, or the "republican" adventurism of "generals" in the small states of South America or some Pacific island. But that does not mean it would be permissible to abandon the republican slogan for serious democratic and socialist movements. We should, and do, ridicule the sordid national squabbles and haggling in Russia and Austria. But that does not mean that it would be permissible to deny support to a national uprising or a serious popular struggle against national oppression.

2) If national uprisings are impossible in the "imperialist era", Kievsky has no right to speak of them. If they are possible, *all* his fine-spun talk about "monism" and our "inventing" examples of self-determination under imperialism, etc., etc., falls to pieces. Kievsky defeats his own arguments.

If "we" "actively resist suppression" of a "national upris-

ing"—a case which P. Kievsky "*himself*" considers possible—what does this mean?

It means that the *action* is twofold, or "dualistic", to employ the philosophical term as incorrectly as our author does: (a) first, it is the "action" of the nationally oppressed proletariat and peasantry *jointly* with the nationally oppressed bourgeoisie *against* the oppressor nation; (b) second, it is the "action" of the proletariat, or of its class-conscious section, in the oppressor nation *against* the bourgeoisie of that nation and all the elements that follow it.

The innumerable phrases against a "national bloc", national "illusions", the "poison" of nationalism, against "fanning national hatred" and the like, to which P. Kievsky resorts, prove to be meaningless. For when he advises the proletariat of the oppressor countries (which, be it remembered, he regards as a serious force) "actively to resist suppression of a national uprising", he thereby *fans* national hatred and *supports* the establishment of a "bloc with the bourgeoisie" by the workers of the oppressed nations.

3) If national uprisings are possible under imperialism, so are national wars. There is no material political difference between the two. Military historians are perfectly right when they put rebellions in the same category as wars. Kievsky has unwittingly refuted not only himself, but also Junius\* and the *Internationale* group, who deny the *possibility* of national wars under imperialism. And this denial is the only conceivable theoretical ground for denying self-determination of nations under imperialism.

4) For what is a "national" uprising? It is an uprising aimed at the achievement of *political* independence of the oppressed nation, i.e., the establishment of a *separate* national state.

If the proletariat of the oppressor nation is a serious force (in the imperialist era, as our author rightly assumes), does not its determination "actively to resist suppression of a na-

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\* Junius—the pen-name of Rosa Luxemburg.—Ed.

tional uprising" *imply assistance* in creating a separate national state? Of course it does.

Though he denies the "achievability" of self-determination, our brave author now argues that the class-conscious proletariat of the advanced countries must *assist* in achieving this "unachievable" goal!

5) *Why* must "we" "actively resist" suppression of a national uprising? P. Kievsky advances only one reason: "...we shall thereby be combating imperialism, our mortal enemy." All the *strength* of this argument lies in the *strong* word "mortal". And this is in keeping with his penchant for strong words instead of strong arguments—high-sounding phrases like "driving a stake into the quivering body of the bourgeoisie" and similar Alexinsky flourishes.

But this Kievsky's argument is *wrong*. Imperialism is as much our "mortal" enemy as is capitalism. That is so. No Marxist will forget, however, that capitalism is progressive compared with feudalism, and that imperialism is progressive compared with pre-monopoly capitalism. Hence, it is *not* every struggle against imperialism that we should support. We will *not* support a struggle of the reactionary classes against imperialism; we will *not* support an uprising of the reactionary classes against imperialism and capitalism.

Consequently, once the author admits the need to support an uprising of an oppressed nation ("actively resisting" suppression means supporting the uprising), he also admits that a national uprising is *progressive*, that the establishment of a separate and new state, of new frontiers, etc., resulting from a successful uprising, is *progressive*.

In *none* of his political arguments is the author consistent!

The Irish Rebellion of 1916, which took place after our theses had appeared in No. 2 of *Uorbote*, proved, incidentally, that it was not idle to speak of the possibility of national uprisings *even* in Europe.

## 6. The Other Political Issues Raised and Distorted by P. Kievsky

Liberation of the colonies, we stated in our theses, means self-determination of nations. Europeans often forget that colonial peoples *too* are nations, but to tolerate this "forgetfulness" is to tolerate chauvinism.

P. Kievsky "objects":

In the pure type of colonies, "there is *no* proletariat in the proper sense of the term" (end of §r, Chapter II). "For whom, then, is the 'self-determination' slogan meant? For the colonial bourgeoisie? For the fellahs? For the peasants? Certainly not. It is absurd for *socialists* [Kievsky's italics] to demand self-determination for the colonies, for it is absurd in general to advance the slogans of a workers' party for countries where there are no workers."

P. Kievsky's anger and his denunciation of our view as "absurd" notwithstanding, we make bold to submit that his arguments are erroneous. Only the late and unlamented Economists believed that the "slogans of a workers' party" are issued *only* for workers.\* No, these slogans are issued for the whole of the labouring population, for the entire people. The democratic part of our programme—Kievsky has given no thought to its significance "in general"—is addressed specifically to the whole people and that is why in it we speak of the "people".\*\*

The colonial and semi-colonial nations, we said, account for 1,000 million people, and P. Kievsky has not taken the trouble to refute that concrete statement. Of these 1,000 million, more than 700 million (China, India, Persia, Egypt) live in countries where *there are* workers. But even with regard

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\* P. Kievsky would do well to reread what A. Martynov and Co. wrote in 1899-1901. He would find many of his "own" arguments there.

\*\* Some curious opponents of "self-determination of nations" try to refute our views with the argument that "nations" are divided into classes! Our customary reply to these caricature Marxists is that the democratic part of our programme speaks of "government by the people".

to colonial countries where there are no workers, only slave-owners and slaves, etc., the demand for "self-determination", far from being absurd, is *obligatory* for every Marxist. And if he gave the matter a little thought, Kievsky would probably realise this, and also that "self-determination" is always advanced "for" two nations: the oppressed and the *oppressing*.

Another of Kievsky's "objections":

"For that reason we limit ourselves, in respect to the colonies, to a negative slogan, i.e., to the demand socialists present to their governments—'get out of the colonies!' Unachievable within the framework of capitalism, this demand serves to intensify the struggle against imperialism, but does not contradict the trend of development, for a socialist society will not possess colonies."

The author's inability, or reluctance, to give the slightest thought to the theoretical contents of political slogans is simply amazing! Are we to believe that the use of a propaganda phrase instead of a theoretically precise political term alters matters? To say "get out of the colonies" is to evade a theoretical analysis and hide behind propaganda phrases! For every one of our Party propagandists, in referring to the Ukraine, Poland, Finland, etc., is fully entitled to demand of the tsarist government (his "own government"): "get out of Finland", etc. However, the intelligent propagandist will understand that we must not advance either positive or negative slogans for the sole purpose of "intensifying" the struggle. Only men of the Alexinsky type could insist that the "negative" slogan "get out of the Black-Hundred Duma" was justified by the desire to "intensify" the struggle against a certain evil.

Intensification of the struggle is an empty phrase of the subjectivists, who forget the Marxist requirement that every slogan be justified by a precise analysis of *economic* realities, the *political* situation and the *political* significance of the slogan. It is embarrassing to have to drive this home, but what can one do?

We know the Alexinsky habit of cutting short a theoretical discussion of a theoretical question by propaganda outcries. It is a bad habit. The slogan "get out of the colonies" has one and only one political and economic content: freedom of secession for the colonial nations, freedom to establish a separate state! If, as P. Kievsky believes, the *general* laws of imperialism prevent the self-determination of nations and make it a utopia, illusion, etc., etc., then how can one, without stopping to think, make an exception from these general laws for *most* of the nations of the world? Obviously, P. Kievsky's "theory" is a caricature of theory.

Commodity production and capitalism, and the connecting threads of finance capital, exist in the vast majority of colonial countries. How, then, can we urge the imperialist countries, their governments, to "get out of the colonies" if, *from the standpoint* of commodity production, capitalism and imperialism, this is an "unscientific" and "utopian" demand, "refuted" *even* by Lensch, Cunow and the rest?

There is not even a shadow of *thought* in the author's argumentation!

He has given no thought to the fact that liberation of the colonies is "unrealisable" *only* in the sense of being "unrealisable without a series of revolutions". He has given no thought to the fact that it is realisable *in conjunction* with a socialist revolution in Europe. He has given no thought to the fact that a "socialist society will not possess" *not only* colonies, but subject nations *in general*. He has given no thought to the fact that, on the question under discussion, there is *no* economic or political difference between Russia's "possession" of Poland or Turkestan. He has given no thought to the fact that a "socialist society" will wish to "get out of the colonies" *only* in the sense of granting them the free *right* to secede, but definitely *not* in the sense of *recommending secession*.

And for this differentiation between the right to secede and the recommendation to secede, P. Kievsky condemns us

as "jugglers", and to "scientifically substantiate" that verdict in the eyes of the workers, he writes:

"What is a worker to think when he asks a propagandist how the proletariat should regard *samostiinost* [political independence for the Ukraine], and gets this answer: socialists are working for the right to secede, but their propaganda is against secession?"

I believe I can give a fairly accurate reply to that question, namely: every sensible worker will *think* that Kievsky is *not capable of thinking*.

Every sensible worker will "think": here we have P. Kievsky telling us workers to shout "get out of the colonies". In other words, we Great-Russian workers must demand from our government that it get out of Mongolia, Turkestan, Persia; English workers must demand that the English Government get out of Egypt, India, Persia, etc. But does this mean that *we* proletarians *wish* to separate ourselves from the Egyptian workers and fellahs, from the Mongolian, Turkestan or Indian workers and peasants? Does it mean that *we* advise the labouring masses of the colonies to "separate" from the class-conscious European proletariat? Nothing of the kind. Now, as always, we stand and shall continue to stand for the closest association and merging of the class-conscious workers of the advanced countries with the workers, peasants and slaves of *all* the oppressed countries. We have always advised and shall continue to advise all the oppressed classes in all the oppressed countries, the colonies included, *not* to separate from us, but to form the closest possible ties and merge with us.

We demand from our governments that they quit the colonies, or, to put it in precise political terms rather than in agitational outcries—that they *grant* the colonies full *freedom* of secession, the genuine *right to self-determination*, and we ourselves are sure to implement this right, and grant this freedom, as soon as we capture power. We demand this from existing governments, and will *do* this when we are the government, *not* in order to "recommend" secession, but,



on the contrary, in order to facilitate and accelerate the *democratic* association and merging of nations. We shall exert every effort to foster association and merger with the Mongolians, Persians, Indians, Egyptians. We believe it is our duty and *in our interest* to do this, for otherwise socialism in Europe will *not be secure*. We shall endeavour to render these nations, more backward and oppressed than we are, "disinterested cultural assistance", to borrow the happy expression of the Polish Social-Democrats. In other words, we will help them pass to the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour, to democracy, to socialism.

If we demand freedom of secession for the Mongolians, Persians, Egyptians and *all* other oppressed and unequal nations without exception, we do so not because *we favour secession*, but *only* because we stand for *free, voluntary* association and merging as distinct from forcible association. That is the *only* reason!

And in this respect the *only* difference between the Mongolian or Egyptian peasants and workers and their Polish or Finnish counterparts is, in our view, that the latter are more developed, more experienced politically than the Great Russians, more economically prepared, etc., and for that reason will in all likelihood *very soon* convince their peoples that it is unwise to extend their present legitimate hatred of the Great Russians, for their role of hangman, to the *socialist* workers and to a socialist Russia. They will convince them that economic expediency and internationalist and democratic instinct and consciousness demand the earliest association of all nations and their merging in a socialist society. And since the Poles and Finns are highly cultured people, they will, in all probability, very soon come to see the correctness of this attitude, and the possible secession of Poland and Finland after the triumph of socialism will therefore be only of short duration. The incomparably less cultured fellahs, Mongolians and Persians might secede for a longer period, but we shall try to shorten it by disinterested cultural assistance as indicated above.

There is *no* other difference in our attitude to the Poles and Mongolians, nor can there be. There is *no* "contradiction", nor can there be, between our propaganda of freedom of secession and our firm resolve to implement that freedom when *we* are the government, and our propaganda of association and merging of nations. That is what, we feel sure, every sensible worker, every genuine socialist and internationalist will "think" of our controversy with P. Kievsky.\*

Running through the article is Kievsky's basic doubt: why advocate and, when we are in power, implement the freedom of nations to *secede*, considering that the trend of development is towards the *merging* of nations? For the same reason—we reply—that we advocate and, when in power, will implement the dictatorship of the proletariat, though the entire trend of development is towards abolition of coercive domination of one part of society over another. Dictatorship is domination of one part of society over the rest of society, and domination, moreover, that rests directly on coercion. Dictatorship of the proletariat, the only consistently revolutionary class, is necessary to overthrow the bourgeoisie and repel its attempts at counter-revolution. The question

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\* Evidently Kievsky simply *repeated* the slogan "get out of the colonies", advanced by certain German and Dutch Marxists, without considering not only its theoretical content and implications, but also the specific features of Russia. It is pardonable—to a certain extent—for a Dutch or German Marxist to confine himself to the slogan "get out of the colonies". For, first, the *typical* form of national oppression, in the case of most West-European countries, is oppression of the colonies, and, second, the very term "colony" has an especially clear, graphic and vital meaning for West-European countries.

But what of Russia? Its peculiarity lies precisely in the fact that the difference between "*our*" "colonies" and "*our*" oppressed nations is not clear, not concrete and not vitally felt!

For a Marxist writing in, say, Germany it might be pardonable to overlook *this* peculiarity of Russia; for Kievsky it is unpardonable. The sheer absurdity of trying to discover some serious difference between oppressed nations and colonies in the case of Russia should be especially clear to a Russian socialist who wants not simply to *repeat*, but to *think*.

of proletarian dictatorship is of such overriding importance that he who denies the need for such dictatorship, or recognises it only in words, cannot be a member of the Social-Democratic Party. However, it cannot be denied that in individual cases, by way of exception, for instance, in some small country after the social revolution has been accomplished in a neighbouring big country, peaceful surrender of power by the bourgeoisie is *possible*, if it is convinced that resistance is hopeless and if it prefers to save its skin. It is much more likely, of course, that even in small states socialism will *not* be achieved without civil war, and for that reason the *only* programme of international Social-Democracy must be recognition of civil war, though violence is, of course, alien to our ideals. The same, *mutatis mutandis* (with the *necessary* alterations), is applicable to nations. We favour their merger, but *now* there can be no transition from forcible merger and annexation to voluntary merger without freedom of secession. We recognise—and quite rightly—the predominance of the economic factor, but to interpret it *à la* Kievsky is to make a caricature of Marxism. Even the trusts and banks of modern imperialism, though inevitable everywhere as part of developed capitalism, differ in their concrete aspects from country to country. There is a still greater difference, despite homogeneity in essentials, between political forms in the advanced imperialist countries—America, England, France, Germany. The same variety will manifest itself also in the path mankind will follow from the imperialism of today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow. All nations will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life. There is nothing more primitive from the viewpoint of theory, or more ridiculous from that of practice, than to paint, “in the name of historical materialism”, *this* aspect of the future in a monotonous grey. The result will

be nothing more than Suzdal daubing.\* And even if reality were to show that *prior* to the first victory of the socialist proletariat only 1/500 of the nations now oppressed will win emancipation and secede, that *prior* to the final victory of the socialist proletariat the world over (i.e., during all the vicissitudes of the socialist revolution) also only 1/500 of the oppressed nations will secede for a very short time—even in that event we would be correct, both from the theoretical and practical political standpoint, in advising the workers, already now, not to permit into their Social-Democratic parties those socialists of the oppressor nations who do not recognise and do not advocate freedom of secession for *all* oppressed nations. For the fact is that we do not know, and cannot know, how many of the oppressed nations will in practice require secession in order to contribute something of their own to the different *forms* of democracy, the different *forms* of transition to socialism. And that the negation of freedom of secession now is theoretically false from beginning to end and in practice amounts to servility to the chauvinists of the oppressing nations—this we know, see and feel daily.

"We emphasise," P. Kievsky writes in a footnote to the passage quoted above, "that we fully support the demand 'against forcible annexation'...."

But he makes no reply, not even by a single word, to our perfectly clear statement that this "demand" is tantamount to recognising self-determination, that there can be no correct definition of the concept "annexation" unless it is seen in context with self-determination. Presumably Kievsky believes that in a discussion it is enough to present one's arguments and demands without any supporting evidence!

He continues: "...We fully accept, in their *negative* formulation, a number of demands that tend to sharpen proletarian consciousness

\* *Suzdal daubing*—crude work executed in a primitive fashion. The expression can be explained by the fact that before the October Revolution crude, gaudily painted and cheap icons were made in Suzdal Uyezd.—Ed.

against imperialism, but there is absolutely no possibility of working out corresponding *positive* formulations on the basis of the existing system. Against war, yes, but not for a democratic peace...."

Wrong—wrong from the first word to the last. Kievsky has read our resolution on "Pacifism and the Peace Slogan" (in the pamphlet *Socialism and War*, pp. 44-45) and even approved it, I believe. But obviously he did not understand it. We are *for* a democratic peace, only we warn the workers against the deception that such a peace is possible under the present, bourgeois governments "without a series of revolutions", as the resolution points out. We denounced as a deception of the workers the "abstract" advocacy of peace, i.e., one that does *not* take into account the real class nature, or, specifically, the imperialist nature of the *present* governments in the belligerent countries. We definitely stated in the *Social-Demokrat* (No. 47) theses that if the revolution places our Party in power during the present war, it will immediately propose a democratic peace to all the warring countries.

Yet, anxious to convince himself and others that he is opposed "only" to self-determination and not to democracy in general, Kievsky ends up by asserting that we are "not for a democratic peace". Curious logic!

There is no need to dwell on all the other examples he cites, and no sense in wasting space on refuting them, for they are on the same level of naïve and fallacious logic and can only make the reader smile. There is not, nor can there be, such a thing as a "negative" Social-Democratic slogan that serves only to "sharpen proletarian consciousness against imperialism" without at the same time offering a positive answer to the question of *how* Social-Democracy will solve the problem when it assumes power. A "negative" slogan unconnected with a definite positive solution will not "sharpen", but dull consciousness, for such a slogan is a hollow phrase, mere shouting, meaningless declamation.

P. Kievsky does not understand the difference between "negative" slogans that stigmatise *political* evils and *econom-*

ic evils. The difference lies in the fact that certain economic evils are part of capitalism as such, whatever the political superstructure, and that it is *impossible* to eliminate them economically without eliminating capitalism itself. Not a single instance can be cited to disprove this. On the other hand, political evils represent a departure from democracy which, economically, is fully possible "on the basis of the existing system", i.e., capitalism, and by way of exception is being implemented under capitalism—certain aspects in one country, other aspects in another. Again, what the author fails to understand is precisely the fundamental conditions necessary for the implementation of democracy in general!

The same applies to the question of divorce. The reader will recall that it was first posed by Rosa Luxemburg in the discussion on the *national* question. She expressed the perfectly justified opinion that if we uphold autonomy within a state (for a definite region, area, etc.), we must, as centralist Social-Democrats, insist that all major national issues—and *divorce* legislation is one of them—should come within the jurisdiction of the central government and central parliament. This example clearly demonstrates that one cannot be a democrat and socialist without demanding full freedom of divorce now, because the lack of such freedom is additional oppression of the oppressed sex—though it should not be difficult to realise that recognition of the *freedom* to leave one's husband is not an *invitation* to all wives to do so!

P. Kievsky "objects":

"What would this right [of divorce] be like if in *such* cases [when the wife *wants* to leave the husband] she could *not* exercise her right? Or if its exercise depended on the will of *third* parties, or, worse still, on the will of claimants to her affections? Would we advocate the proclamation of *such* a right? Of course not!"

That objection reveals complete failure to understand the relation between democracy *in general* and capitalism. The conditions that make it impossible for the oppressed classes to "exercise" their democratic rights are not the exception under capitalism; they are typical of the system. In most

cases the right of divorce will remain unrealisable under capitalism, for the oppressed sex is subjugated economically. No matter how much democracy there is under capitalism, the woman remains a "domestic slave", a slave locked up in the bedroom, nursery, kitchen. The right to elect their "own" people's judges, officials, school-teachers, jurymen, etc., is likewise in most cases unrealisable under capitalism precisely because of the economic subjection of the workers and peasants. The same applies to the democratic republic: our programme defines it as "government by the people", though all Social-Democrats know perfectly well that under capitalism, even in the most democratic republic, there is bound to be bribery of officials by the bourgeoisie and an alliance of stock exchange and the government.

Only those who cannot think straight or have no knowledge of Marxism will conclude: so there is no point in having a republic, no point in freedom of divorce, no point in democracy, no point in self-determination of nations! But Marxists know that democracy does *not* abolish class oppression. It only makes the class struggle more direct, wider, more open and pronounced, and that is what we need. The fuller the freedom of divorce, the clearer will women see that the source of their "domestic slavery" is capitalism, not lack of rights. The more democratic the system of government, the clearer will the workers see that the root evil is capitalism, not lack of rights. The fuller national equality (and it is *not* complete without freedom of secession), the clearer will the workers of the oppressed nations see that the cause of their oppression is capitalism, not lack of rights, etc.

It must be said again and again: It is embarrassing to have to drive home the ABC of Marxism, but what is one to do if Kievsky does not know it?

He discusses divorce in much the same way as one of the secretaries of the Organising Committee abroad, Semkovsky, discussed it, if I remember rightly, in the *Paris Golos*. His line of reasoning was that freedom of divorce is not, it

is true, an invitation to all wives to leave their husbands, but if it is proved that all other husbands are better than yours, madame, then it amounts to one and the same thing!!

In taking that line of argument Semkovsky forgot that crank thinking is not a violation of socialist or democratic principles. If Semkovsky were to tell a woman that all other husbands were better than hers, no one would regard this as violation of democratic principles. At most people would say: There are bound to be big cranks in a big party! But if Semkovsky were to take it into his head to defend as a democrat a person who opposed freedom of divorce and appealed to the courts, the police or the church to prevent his wife leaving him, we feel sure that *even* most of Semkovsky's colleagues on the Secretariat Abroad, though they are sorry socialists, would refuse to support him!

Both Semkovsky and Kievsky, in their "discussion" of divorce, fail to understand the issue and avoid its substance, namely, that under capitalism the right of divorce, as *all* other democratic rights without exception, is conditional, restricted, formal, narrow and extremely difficult of realisation. Yet no self-respecting Social-Democrat will consider anyone opposing the right of divorce a democrat, let alone a socialist. That is the crux of the matter. *All* "democracy" consists in the proclamation and realisation of "rights" which under capitalism are realisable only to a very small degree and only relatively. But without the proclamation of these rights, without a struggle to introduce them now, immediately, without training the masses in the spirit of this struggle, socialism is *impossible*.

Having failed to understand that, Kievsky bypasses the central question, that belongs to his special subject, namely, *how* will we Social-Democrats abolish national oppression? He shunts the question aside with phrases about the world being "drenched in blood", etc. (though this has no bearing on the matter under discussion). This leaves only one single argument: the socialist revolution will solve everything!



Or, the argument sometimes advanced by people who share his views: self-determination is impossible under capitalism and superfluous under socialism.

From the theoretical standpoint that view is nonsensical; from the practical political standpoint it is chauvinistic. It fails to appreciate the significance of democracy. For socialism is impossible without democracy because: (1) the proletariat cannot perform the socialist revolution unless it prepares for it by the struggle for democracy; (2) victorious socialism cannot consolidate its victory and bring humanity to the withering away of the state without implementing full democracy. To claim that self-determination is superfluous under socialism is therefore just as nonsensical and just as hopelessly confusing as to claim that democracy is superfluous under socialism.

Self-determination is *no more* impossible under capitalism, and *just* as superfluous under socialism, as democracy generally.

The economic revolution will create the necessary prerequisites for eliminating *all* types of political oppression. Precisely for that reason it is illogical and incorrect to reduce everything to the economic revolution, for the question is: *how* to eliminate national oppression? It cannot be eliminated without an economic revolution. That is incontestable. But to *limit* ourselves to this is to lapse into absurd and wretched imperialist Economism.

We must carry out national *equality*; proclaim, formulate and implement equal "rights" for all nations. *Everyone* agrees with that save, perhaps, P. Kievsky. But this poses a question which Kievsky avoids: is not negation of the *right* to form a national state negation of equality?

Of course it is. And consistent, i.e., socialist, democrats proclaim, formulate and will implement this right, without which there is no path to complete, voluntary rapprochement and merging of nations.

## 7. Conclusion. Alexinsky Methods

We have analysed only a fraction of P. Kievsky's arguments. To analyse *all* of them would require an article five times the length of this one, for there is not a single correct view in the whole of what Kievsky has to say. What is *correct*—if there are no mistakes in the figures—is the footnote data on banks. All the rest is an impossible tangle of confusion peppered with phrases like “driving a stake into the quivering body”, “we shall not only judge the conquering heroes, but condemn them to death and elimination”, “the new world will be born in agonising convulsions”, “the question will not be one of granting charters and rights, nor of proclaiming the freedom of the nations, but of establishing genuinely free relationships, destroying age-old slavery and social oppression in general, and national oppression in particular”, and so on and so forth.

These phrases are, at one and the same time, the cover and expression of two things: first, their underlying “idea” is *imperialist Economism*, which is just as ugly a caricature of Marxism, and just as complete a misinterpretation of the relationship between socialism and democracy, as was the late and unlamented Economism of 1894-1902.

Second, we have in these phrases a repetition of Alexinsky methods. This should be especially emphasised, for a whole section of Kievsky's article (Chapter II, §f, “The Special Position of the Jews”) is based *exclusively* on these methods.

At the 1907 London Congress the Bolsheviks would dissociate themselves from Alexinsky when, in reply to theoretical arguments, he would pose as an agitator and resort to high-falutin, but entirely irrelevant, phrases against one or another type of exploitation and oppression. “He's begun his shouting again,” our delegates would say. And the “shouting” did not do Alexinsky any good.

There is the same kind of “shouting” in Kievsky's article. He has no reply to the theoretical questions and arguments expounded in the theses. Instead, he poses as an agitator and

begins shouting about the oppression of the Jews, though every thinking person will realise that his shouting, and the Jewish question in general, have no relation whatever to the subject under discussion.

Alexinsky methods can lead to no good.

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## Lecture on the 1905 Revolution\*

My young friends and comrades,

Today is the twelfth anniversary of "Bloody Sunday", which is rightly regarded as the beginning of the Russian revolution.

Thousands of workers—not Social-Democrats, but loyal God-fearing subjects—led by the priest Gapon, streamed from all parts of the capital to its centre, to the square in front of the Winter Palace, to submit a petition to the tsar. The workers carried icons. In a letter to the tsar, their then leader, Gapon, had guaranteed his personal safety and asked him to appear before the people.

Troops were called out. Uhlans and Cossacks attacked the crowd with drawn swords. They fired on the unarmed workers, who on their bended knees implored the Cossacks to allow them to go to the tsar. Over one thousand were killed and over two thousand wounded on that day, according to police reports. The indignation of the workers was indescribable.

Such is the general picture of January 22, 1905—"Bloody Sunday".

That you may understand more clearly the historic significance of this event, I shall quote a few passages from the workers' petition. It begins with the following words:

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\* *The Lecture on the 1905 Revolution* was delivered by Lenin in German on January 9 (22), 1917, at a meeting of young workers in the Zurich People's House.—Ed.

"We workers, inhabitants of St. Petersburg, have come to Thee. We are unfortunate, reviled slaves, weighed down by despotism and tyranny. Our patience exhausted, we ceased work and begged our masters to give us only that without which life is a torment. But this was refused; to the employers everything seemed unlawful. We are here, many thousands of us. Like the whole of the Russian people, we have no human rights whatever. Owing to the deeds of Thy officials we have become slaves."

The petition contains the following demands: amnesty, civil liberties, fair wages, gradual transfer of the land to the people, convocation of a constituent assembly on the basis of universal and equal suffrage. It ends with the following words:

"Sire, do not refuse aid to Thy people! Demolish the wall that separates Thee from Thy people. Order and promise that our requests will be granted, and Thou wilt make Russia happy; if not, we are ready to die on this very spot. We have only two roads: freedom and happiness, or the grave."

Reading it *now*, this petition of uneducated, illiterate workers, led by a patriarchal priest, creates a strange impression. Involuntarily one compares this naïve petition with the present peace resolutions of the social-pacifists, the would-be socialists who in reality are bourgeois phrase-mongers. The unenlightened workers of pre-revolutionary Russia did not know that the tsar was the head of the *ruling class*, the class, namely, of big landowners, already bound by a thousand ties with the big bourgeoisie and prepared to defend their monopoly, privileges and profits by every means of violence. The social-pacifists of today, who pretend to be "highly educated" people—no joking—do not realise that it is just as foolish to expect a "democratic" peace from bourgeois governments that are waging an imperialist predatory war, as it was to believe that peaceful petitions would induce the bloody tsar to grant democratic reforms.

Nevertheless, there is a great difference between the two—the present-day social-pacifists are, to a large extent, hypocrites, who strive by gentle admonitions to divert the people from the revolutionary struggle, whereas the uneducated workers in pre-revolutionary Russia proved by their deeds

that they were straightforward people awakened to political consciousness for the first time.

It is in this awakening of tremendous masses of the people to political consciousness and revolutionary struggle that the historic significance of January 22, 1905 lies.

"There is not yet a revolutionary people in Russia," wrote Mr. Pyotr Struve, then leader of the Russian liberals and publisher abroad of an illegal, uncensored organ, *two days* before "Bloody Sunday". The idea that an illiterate peasant country could produce a revolutionary people seemed utterly absurd to this "highly educated", supercilious and extremely stupid leader of the bourgeois reformists. So deep was the conviction of the reformists of those days—as of the reformists of today—that a real revolution was impossible!

Prior to January 22 (or January 9, old style), 1905, the revolutionary party of Russia consisted of a small group of people, and the reformists of those days (exactly like the reformists of today) derisively called us a "sect". Several hundred revolutionary organisers, several thousand members of local organisations, half a dozen revolutionary papers appearing not more frequently than once a month, published mainly abroad and smuggled into Russia with incredible difficulty and at the cost of many sacrifices—such were the revolutionary parties in Russia, and the revolutionary Social-Democracy in particular, prior to January 22, 1905. This circumstance gave the narrow-minded and overbearing reformists formal justification for their claim that there was not yet a revolutionary people in Russia.

Within a few months, however, the picture changed completely. The hundreds of revolutionary Social-Democrats "suddenly" grew into thousands; the thousands became the leaders of between two and three million proletarians. The proletarian struggle produced widespread ferment, often revolutionary movements among the peasant masses, fifty to a hundred million strong; the peasant movement had its reverberations in the army and led to soldiers' revolts, to armed clashes between one section of the army and another.

In this manner a colossal country, with a population of 130,000,000, went into the revolution; in this way, dormant Russia was transformed into a Russia of a revolutionary proletariat and a revolutionary people.

It is necessary to study this transformation, understand why it was possible, its methods and ways, so to speak.

The principal factor in this transformation was the *mass strike*. The peculiarity of the Russian revolution is that it was a *bourgeois-democratic* revolution in its social content, but a *proletarian* revolution in its methods of struggle. It was a bourgeois-democratic revolution since its immediate aim, which it could achieve directly and with its own forces, was a democratic republic, the eight-hour day and confiscation of the immense estates of the nobility—all the measures the French bourgeois revolution in 1792-93 had almost completely achieved.

At the same time, the Russian revolution was also a proletarian revolution, not only in the sense that the proletariat was the leading force, the vanguard of the movement, but also in the sense that a specifically proletarian weapon of struggle—the strike—was the principal means of bringing the masses into motion and the most characteristic phenomenon in the wave-like rise of decisive events.

The Russian revolution was the *first*, though certainly not the last, great revolution in history in which the mass political strike played an extraordinarily important part. It may even be said that the events of the Russian revolution and the sequence of its political forms cannot be understood without a study of the *strike statistics* to disclose the *basis* of these events and this sequence of forms.

I know perfectly well that dry statistics are hardly suitable in a lecture and are likely to bore the hearer. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from quoting a few figures, in order that you may be able to appreciate the real objective basis of the whole movement. The average annual number of strikers in Russia during the ten years preceding the revolution was 43,000, which means 430,000 for the decade. In January

1905, the first month of the revolution, the number of strikers was 440,000. In other words, there were *more* strikers in *one month* than in the whole of the preceding decade!

In no capitalist country in the world, not even in the most advanced countries like England, the United States of America, or Germany, has there been anything to match the tremendous Russian strike movement of 1905. The total number of strikers was 2,800,000, more than two times the number of factory workers in the country! This, of course, does not prove that the urban factory workers of Russia were more educated, or stronger, or more adapted to the struggle than their brothers in Western Europe. The very opposite is true.

But it does show how great the dormant energy of the proletariat can be. It shows that in a revolutionary epoch—I say this without the slightest exaggeration, on the basis of the most accurate data of Russian history—the proletariat *can* generate fighting energy *a hundred times greater* than in ordinary, peaceful times. It shows that up to 1905 mankind did not yet know what a great, what a tremendous exertion of effort the proletariat is, and will be, capable of in a fight for really great aims, and one waged in a really revolutionary manner!

The history of the Russian revolution shows that it was the vanguard, the finest elements of the wage-workers, that fought with the greatest tenacity and the greatest devotion. The larger the mills and factories involved, the more stubborn were the strikes, and the more often did they recur during the year. The bigger the city, the more important was the part the proletariat played in the struggle. Three big cities, St. Petersburg, Riga and Warsaw, which have the largest and most class-conscious working-class element, show an immeasurably greater number of strikers, in relation to all workers, than any other city, and, of course, much greater than the rural districts.\*

In Russia—as probably in other capitalist countries—the metalworkers represent the vanguard of the proletariat. In

\* In the manuscript this paragraph is crossed out.—Ed.



this connection we note the following instructive fact: taking all industries, the number of persons involved in strikes in 1905 was 160 per hundred workers employed, but in the *metal industry* the number was 320 per hundred! It is estimated that in consequence of the 1905 strikes every Russian factory worker lost an average of ten rubles in wages—approximately 26 francs at the pre-war rate of exchange—sacrificing this money, as it were, for the sake of the struggle. But if we take the metalworkers, we find that the loss in wages was *three times as great*! The finest elements of the working class marched in the forefront, giving leadership to the hesitant, rousing the dormant and encouraging the weak.

A distinctive feature was the manner in which economic strikes were interwoven with political strikes during the revolution. There can be no doubt that only this very close link-up of the two forms of strike gave the movement its great power. The broad masses of the exploited could not have been drawn into the revolutionary movement had they not been given daily examples of how the wage-workers in the various industries were forcing the capitalists to grant immediate, direct improvements in their conditions. This struggle imbued the masses of the Russian people with a new spirit. Only then did the old serf-ridden, sluggish, patriarchal, pious and obedient Russia cast out the old Adam; only then did the Russian people obtain a really democratic and really revolutionary education.

When the bourgeois gentry and their uncritical echoers, the social-reformists, talk priggishly about the "education" of the masses, they usually mean something schoolmasterly, pedantic, something that demoralises the masses and instils in them bourgeois prejudices.

The real education of the masses can never be separated from their independent political, and especially revolutionary, struggle. Only struggle educates the exploited class. Only struggle discloses to it the magnitude of its own power, widens its horizon, enhances its abilities, clarifies its mind, forges its will. That is why even reactionaries had to admit

that the year 1905, the year of struggle, the "mad year", definitely buried patriarchal Russia.

Let us examine more closely the relation, in the 1905 strike struggles, between the metalworkers and the textile workers. The metalworkers are the best paid, the most class-conscious and best educated proletarians. The textile workers, who in 1905 were two and a half times more numerous than the metalworkers, are the most backward and the worst paid body of workers in Russia, and in very many cases have not yet definitely severed connections with their peasant kinsmen in the village. This brings us to a very important circumstance.

Throughout the whole of 1905, the metalworkers' strikes show a preponderance of political over economic strikes, though this preponderance was far greater toward the end of the year than at the beginning. Among the textile workers, on the other hand, we observe an overwhelming preponderance of economic strikes at the beginning of 1905, and it is only at the end of the year that we get a preponderance of political strikes. From this it follows quite obviously that the economic struggle, the struggle for immediate and direct improvement of conditions, is alone capable of rousing the most backward strata of the exploited masses, gives them a real education and transforms them—during a revolutionary period—into an army of political fighters within the space of a few months.

Of course, for this to happen, it was necessary for the vanguard of the workers not to regard the class struggle as a struggle in the interests of a thin upper stratum—a conception the reformists all too often try to instil—but for the proletariat to come forward as the real vanguard of the majority of the exploited and draw that majority into the struggle, as was the case in Russia in 1905, and as must be, and certainly will be, the case in the impending proletarian revolution in Europe.\*

\* In the manuscript the four preceding paragraphs are crossed out.—Ed.

The beginning of 1905 brought the first great wave of strikes that swept the entire country. As early as the spring of that year we see the rise of the first big, not only economic, but also political *peasant movement* in Russia. The importance of this historical turning-point will be appreciated if it is borne in mind that the Russian peasantry was liberated from the severest form of serfdom only in 1861, that the majority of the peasants are illiterate, that they live in indescribable poverty, oppressed by the landlords, deluded by the priests and isolated from each other by vast distances and an almost complete absence of roads.

Russia witnessed the first revolutionary movement against tsarism in 1825,\* a movement represented almost exclusively by noblemen. Thereafter and up to 1881, when Alexander II was assassinated by the terrorists,\*\* the movement was led by middle-class intellectuals. They displayed supreme self-sacrifice and astonished the whole world by the heroism of their terrorist methods of struggle. Their sacrifices were certainly not in vain. They doubtlessly contributed—directly or indirectly—to the subsequent revolutionary education of the Russian people. But they did not, and could not, achieve their immediate aim of generating a people's revolution.

That was achieved only by the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. Only the waves of mass strikes that swept over the whole country, strikes connected with the severe lessons of the imperialist Russo-Japanese War, roused the broad masses of peasants from their lethargy. The word "striker" acquired an entirely new meaning among the peasants: it signified a rebel, a revolutionary, a term previously expressed by the word "student". But the "student" belonged to the middle class, to the "learned", to the "gentry", and was therefore alien to the people. The "striker", on the other hand,

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\* Lenin refers to the Decembrists' uprising.—Ed.

\*\* Alexander II was assassinated by the Narodnaya Volya terrorists on March 1, 1881.—Ed.

was of the people; he belonged to the exploited class. Deported from St. Petersburg, he often returned to the village where he told his fellow-villagers of the conflagration which was spreading to all the cities and would destroy both the capitalists and the nobility. A new type appeared in the Russian village—the class-conscious young peasant. He associated with “strikers”, he read newspapers, he told the peasants about events in the cities, explained to his fellow-villagers the meaning of political demands, and urged them to fight the landowning nobility, the priests and the government officials.

The peasants would gather in groups to discuss their conditions, and gradually they were drawn into the struggle. Large crowds attacked the big estates, set fire to the manor-houses and appropriated supplies, seized grain and other foodstuffs, killed policemen and demanded transfer to the people of the huge estates.

In the spring of 1905, the peasant movement was only just beginning, involving only a minority, approximately one-seventh, of the uyezds.

But the combination of the proletarian mass strikes in the cities with the peasant movement in the rural areas was sufficient to shake the “firmest” and last prop of tsarism. I refer to the *army*.

There began a series of *mutinies* in the navy and the army. During the revolution, every fresh wave of strikes and of the peasant movement was accompanied by mutinies in all parts of Russia. The most well-known of these is the mutiny on the Black Sea cruiser *Prince Potemkin*, which was seized by the mutineers and took part in the revolution in Odessa. After the defeat of the revolution and unsuccessful attempts to seize other ports (Feodosia in the Crimea, for instance), it surrendered to the Rumanian authorities in Constantza.

Permit me to relate in detail one small episode of the Black Sea mutiny in order to give you a concrete picture of events at the peak of the movement.

"Gatherings of revolutionary workers and sailors were being organised more and more frequently. Since servicemen were not allowed to attend workers' meetings, large crowds of workers came to military meetings. They came in thousands. The idea of joint action found a lively response. Delegates were elected from the companies where political understanding among the men was higher.

"The military authorities thereupon decided to take action. Some of the officers tried to deliver 'patriotic' speeches at the meetings but failed dismally: the sailors, who were accustomed to debating, put their officers to shameful flight. In view of this, it was decided to prohibit meetings altogether. On the morning of November 24, 1905, a company of sailors, in full combat kit, was posted at the gates of the naval barracks. Rear-Admiral Pisarevsky gave the order in a loud voice: 'No one is to leave the barracks! Shoot anyone who disobeys!' A sailor named Petrov, of the company that had been given that order, stepped forth from the ranks, loaded his rifle in the view of all, and with one shot killed Captain Stein of the Belostok Regiment, and with another wounded Rear-Admiral Pisarevsky. 'Arrest him!' one of the officers shouted. No one budged. Petrov threw down his rifle, exclaiming: 'Why don't you move? Take me!' He was arrested. The sailors, who rushed from every side, angrily demanded his release, declaring that they vouched for him. Excitement ran high.

"'Petrov, the shot was an accident, wasn't it?' asked one of the officers, trying to find a way out of the situation.

"'What do you mean, an accident? I stepped forward, loaded and took aim. Is that an accident?'

"'They demand your release....'

"And Petrov was released. The sailors, however, were not content with that; all officers on duty were arrested, disarmed, and locked up at headquarters.... Sailor delegates, about forty in number, conferred the whole night. The decision was to release the officers, but not to permit them to enter the barracks again."

This small incident clearly shows you how events developed in most of the mutinies. The revolutionary ferment among the people could not but spread to the armed forces. It is indicative that the leaders of the movement came from *those elements* in the army and the navy who had been recruited mainly from among the industrial workers and of whom more technical training was required, for instance, the sappers. The broad masses, however, were still too naïve, their mood was too passive, too good-natured, too Christian. They flared up rather quickly; any instance of injustice, excessively harsh

treatment by the officers, bad food, etc., could lead to revolt. But what they lacked was persistence, a clear perception of aim, a clear understanding that only the most vigorous continuation of the armed struggle, only a victory over all the military and civil authorities, only the overthrow of the government and the seizure of power throughout the country could guarantee the success of the revolution.

The broad masses of sailors and soldiers were easily roused to revolt. But with equal light-heartedness they foolishly released arrested officers. They allowed the officers to pacify them by promises and persuasion; in this way the officers gained precious time, brought in reinforcements, broke the strength of the rebels, and then followed the most brutal suppression of the movement and the execution of its leaders.

A comparison of these 1905 mutinies with the Decembrist uprising of 1825 is particularly interesting. In 1825 the leaders of the political movement were almost exclusively officers, and officers drawn from the nobility. They had become infected, through contact, with the democratic ideas of Europe during the Napoleonic wars. The mass of the soldiers, who at that time were still serfs, remained passive.

The history of 1905 presents a totally different picture. With few exceptions, the mood of the officers was either bourgeois-liberal, reformist, or frankly counter-revolutionary. The workers and peasants in military uniform were the soul of the mutinies. The movement spread to all sections of the people, and for the first time in Russia's history involved the majority of the exploited. But what it lacked was, on the one hand, persistence and determination among the masses—they were too much afflicted with the malady of trustfulness—and, on the other, organisation of revolutionary. Social-Democratic workers in military uniform—they lacked the ability to take the leadership into their own hands, march at the head of the revolutionary army and launch an offensive against the government.

I might remark, incidentally, that these two shortcomings will—more slowly, perhaps, than we would like, but surely—

be eliminated not only by the general development of capitalism, but also by the present war. . . .\*

At any rate, the history of the Russian revolution, like the history of the Paris Commune of 1871, teaches us the incontrovertible lesson that militarism can never and under no circumstances be defeated and destroyed, except by a victorious struggle of one section of the national army against the other section. It is not sufficient simply to denounce, revile and "repudiate" militarism, to criticise and prove that it is harmful; it is foolish peacefully to refuse to perform military service. The task is to keep the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat tense and train its best elements, not only in a general way, but concretely, so that when popular ferment reaches the highest pitch, they will put themselves at the head of the revolutionary army.

The day-to-day experience of any capitalist country teaches us the same lesson. Every "minor" crisis that such a country experiences discloses to us in miniature the elements, the rudiments, of the battles that will inevitably take place on a large scale during a big crisis. What else, for instance, is a strike if not a minor crisis of capitalist society? Was not the Prussian Minister for Internal Affairs, Herr von Puttkammer, right when he coined the famous phrase: "In every strike there lurks the hydra of revolution"? Does not the calling out of troops during strikes in all, even the most peaceful, the most "democratic"—save the mark—capitalist countries show *how* things will shape out in a really *big* crisis?

But to return to the history of the Russian revolution.

I have tried to show you how the workers' strikes stirred up the whole country and the broadest, most backward strata of the exploited, how the peasant movement began, and how it was accompanied by mutiny in the armed forces.

The movement reached its zenith in the autumn of 1905. On August 19(6), the tsar issued a manifesto on the introduction of popular representation. The so-called Bulygin

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\* In the manuscript the three preceding paragraphs are crossed out.—*Ed.*

Duma was to be created on the basis of a suffrage embracing a ridiculously small number of voters, and this peculiar "parliament" was to have no legislative powers whatever, only *advisory*, consultative powers!

The bourgeoisie, the liberals, the opportunists were ready to grasp with both hands this "gift" of the frightened tsar. Like all reformists, our reformists of 1905 could not understand that historic situations arise when reforms, and particularly promises of reforms, pursue *only* one aim: to allay the unrest of the people, force the revolutionary class to cease, or at least slacken, its struggle.

The Russian revolutionary Social-Democracy was well aware of the real nature of this grant of an illusory constitution in August 1905. That is why, without a moment's hesitation, it issued the slogans: "Down with the advisory Duma! Boycott the Duma! Down with the tsarist government! Continue the revolutionary struggle to overthrow it! Not the tsar, but a provisional revolutionary government must convene Russia's first real, popular representative assembly!"

History proved that the revolutionary Social-Democrats were right, for the *Bulygin Duma* was never convened. It was swept away by the revolutionary storm before it could be convened. And this storm forced the tsar to promulgate a new electoral law, which provided for a considerable increase in the number of voters, and to recognise the legislative character of the Duma.\*

October and December 1905 marked the highest point in the rising tide of the Russian revolution. All the well-springs of the people's revolutionary strength flowed in a wider stream than ever before. The number of strikers—which in January 1905, as I have already told you, was 440,000—reached over half a million in October 1905 (in a single month!). To this number, which applies *only* to factory workers, must be added several hundred thousand railway workers, postal and telegraph employees, etc.

\* In the manuscript the four preceding paragraphs are crossed out.—*Ed.*



The general railway strike stopped all rail traffic and paralysed the power of the government in the most effective manner. The doors of the universities were flung wide open, and the lecture halls, which in peace time were used solely to befuddle youthful minds with pedantic professorial wisdom and to turn the students into docile servants of the bourgeoisie and tsarism, now became the scene of public meetings at which thousands of workers, artisans and office workers openly and freely discussed political issues.

Freedom of the press was won. The censorship was simply ignored. No publisher dared send the obligatory censor-copy to the authorities, and the authorities did not dare take any measure against this. For the first time in Russian history, revolutionary newspapers appeared freely in St. Petersburg and other towns. In St. Petersburg alone, three Social-Democratic daily papers were published, with circulations ranging from 50,000 to 100,000.

The proletariat marched at the head of the movement. It set out to win the eight-hour day by revolutionary action. "*An Eight-Hour Day and Arms!*" was the fighting slogan of the St. Petersburg proletariat. That the fate of the revolution could, and would, be decided only by armed struggle was becoming obvious to an ever-increasing mass of workers.

In the fire of battle, a peculiar mass organisation was formed, the famous *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*, comprising delegates from all factories. In several cities these *Soviets of Workers' Deputies* began more and more to play the part of a provisional revolutionary government, the part of organs and leaders of the uprising. Attempts were made to organise *Soviets of Soldiers' and Sailors' Deputies* and to combine them with the *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*.

For a time several cities in Russia became something in the nature of small local "republics". The government authorities were deposed and the Soviet of Workers' Deputies actually functioned as the new government. Unfortunately, these periods were all too brief, the "victories" were too weak, too isolated.

The peasant movement in the autumn of 1905 reached still greater dimensions. *Over one-third* of all the uyezds were affected by the so-called "peasant disorders" and regular peasant uprisings. The peasants burned down no less than two thousand estates and distributed among themselves the food stocks of which the predatory nobility had robbed the people.

Unfortunately, this work was not thorough enough! Unfortunately, the peasants destroyed only one-fifteenth of the total number of landed estates, only one-fifteenth part of what they *should have* destroyed in order to wipe the shame of large feudal landownership from the face of the Russian earth. Unfortunately, the peasants were too scattered, too isolated from each other in their actions; they were not organised enough, not aggressive enough, and therein lies one of the fundamental reasons for the defeat of the revolution.

A movement for national liberation flared up among the oppressed peoples of Russia. *Over one-half, almost three-fifths (to be exact, 57 per cent)* of the population of Russia is subject to national oppression; they are not even free to use their native language, they are forcibly Russified. The Moslems, for instance, who number tens of millions, were quick to organise a Moslem League—this was a time of rapid growth of all manner of organisations.

The following instance will give the audience, particularly the youth, an example of how at that time the movement for national liberation in Russia rose in conjunction with the labour movement.

In December 1905, Polish children in hundreds of schools burned all Russian books, pictures and portraits of the tsar, and attacked and drove out the Russian teachers and their Russian schoolfellows, shouting: "Get out! Go back to Russia!" The Polish secondary school pupils put forward, among others, the following demands: (1) all secondary schools must be under the control of a Soviet of Workers' Deputies; (2) joint pupils' and workers' meetings to be held in school premises; (3) secondary school pupils to be allowed to wear red

blouses as a token of adherence to the future proletarian republic.

The higher the tide of the movement rose, the more vigorously and decisively did the reaction arm itself to fight the revolution. The Russian Revolution of 1905 confirmed the truth of what Karl Kautsky wrote in 1902 in his book *Social Revolution* (he was still, incidentally, a revolutionary Marxist and not, as at present, a champion of social-patriotism and opportunism). This is what he wrote:

"...The impending revolution ... will be less like a spontaneous uprising against the government and more like a protracted *civil war*."

That is how it was, and undoubtedly that is how it will be in the coming European revolution!

Tsarism vented its hatred particularly upon the Jews. On the one hand, the Jews furnished a particularly high percentage (compared with the total Jewish population) of leaders of the revolutionary movement. And now, too, it should be noted to the credit of the Jews, they furnish a relatively high percentage of internationalists, compared with other nations. On the other hand, tsarism adroitly exploited the basest anti-Jewish prejudices of the most ignorant strata of the population. This gave rise to *pogroms* which were in most cases backed if not directly led by the police—over 4,000 were killed and more than 10,000 mutilated in 100 towns. These atrocious massacres of peaceful Jews, their wives and children roused disgust throughout the civilised world. I have in mind, of course, the disgust of the truly democratic elements of the civilised world, and these are *exclusively* the socialist workers, the proletarians.

Even in the freest, even in the republican countries of Western Europe, the bourgeoisie manages very well to combine its hypocritical phrases about "Russian atrocities" with the most shameless financial transactions, particularly with financial support of tsarism and imperialist exploitation of Russia through export of capital, etc.

The climax of the 1905 Revolution came in the December uprising in Moscow. For nine days a small number of rebels, of organised and armed workers—there were not more than *eight thousand*—fought against the tsar's government, which dared not trust the Moscow garrison. In fact, it had to keep it locked up, and was able to quell the rebellion only by bringing in the Semenovskiy Regiment from St. Petersburg.

The bourgeoisie likes to describe the Moscow uprising as something artificial, and to treat it with ridicule. For instance, in German so-called "scientific" literature, Herr Professor Max Weber, in his lengthy survey of Russia's political development, refers to the Moscow uprising as a "putsch". "The Lenin group," says this "highly learned" Herr Professor, "and a section of the Socialist-Revolutionaries had long prepared for this *senseless* uprising."

To properly assess this piece of professorial wisdom of the cowardly bourgeoisie, one need only recall the strike statistics. In January 1905, only 123,000 were involved in purely political strikes, in October the figure was 330,000, and in *December the maximum was reached—370,000* taking part in purely political strikes in a single month! Let us recall, too, the progress of the revolution, the peasant and soldier uprisings, and we shall see that the bourgeois "scientific" view of the December uprising is not only absurd. It is a subterfuge resorted to by the representatives of the cowardly bourgeoisie, which sees in the proletariat its most dangerous class enemy.

In reality, the inexorable trend of the Russian revolution was towards an armed, decisive battle between the tsarist government and the vanguard of the class-conscious proletariat.

I have already pointed out, in my previous remarks, wherein lay the weakness of the Russian revolution that led to its temporary defeat.

The suppression of the December uprising marked the beginning of the ebb of the revolution. But in this period, too, extremely interesting moments are to be observed. Suffice it to recall that twice the foremost militant elements of the

working class tried to check the retreat of the revolution and to prepare a new offensive.

But my time has nearly expired, and I do not want to abuse the patience of my audience. I think, however, that I have outlined the most important aspects of the revolution—its class character, its driving forces and its methods of struggle—as fully as so big a subject can be dealt with in a brief lecture.\*

A few brief remarks concerning the world significance of the Russian revolution.

Geographically, economically and historically, Russia belongs not only to Europe, but also to Asia. That is why the Russian revolution succeeded not only in finally awakening Europe's biggest and most backward country and in creating a revolutionary people led by a revolutionary proletariat.

It achieved more than that. The Russian revolution engendered a movement throughout the whole of Asia. The revolutions in Turkey, Persia and China prove that the mighty uprising of 1905 left a deep imprint, and that its influence, expressed in the forward movement of *hundreds and hundreds* of millions, is ineradicable.

In an indirect way, the Russian revolution influenced also the countries of the West. One must not forget that news of the tsar's constitutional manifesto, on reaching Vienna on October 30, 1905, played a decisive part in the final victory of universal suffrage in Austria.

A telegram bearing the news was placed on the speaker's rostrum at the Congress of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party just as Comrade Ellenbogen—at that time he was not yet a social-patriot, but a comrade—was delivering his report on the political strike. The discussion was immediately adjourned. "Our place is in the streets!"—was the cry that resounded through the hall where the delegates of the Austrian Social-Democracy were assembled. And the following days witnessed the biggest street demonstrations in

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\* In the manuscript this sentence is crossed out.—Ed.

Vienna and barricades in Prague. The battle for universal suffrage in Austria was won.

We very often meet West-Europeans who talk of the Russian revolution as if events, the course and methods of struggle in that backward country have very little resemblance to West-European patterns, and, therefore, can hardly have any practical significance.

Nothing could be more erroneous.

The forms and occasions for the impending battles in the coming European revolution will doubtlessly differ in many respects from the forms of the Russian revolution.

Nevertheless, the Russian revolution—precisely because of its proletarian character, in that particular sense of which I have spoken—is the *prologue* to the coming European revolution. Undoubtedly, this coming revolution can only be a proletarian revolution, and in an even more profound sense of the word: a proletarian, socialist revolution also in its content. This coming revolution will show to an even greater degree, on the one hand, that only stern battles, only civil wars, can free humanity from the yoke of capital, and, on the other hand, that only class-conscious proletarians can and will give leadership to the vast majority of the exploited.

We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness in Europe. Europe is pregnant with revolution. The monstrous horrors of the imperialist war, the suffering caused by the high cost of living everywhere engender a revolutionary mood; and the ruling classes, the bourgeoisie, and its servitors, the governments, are more and more moving into a blind alley from which they can never extricate themselves without tremendous upheavals.

Just as in Russia in 1905, a popular uprising against the tsarist government began under the leadership of the proletariat with the aim of achieving a democratic republic, so, in Europe, the coming years, precisely because of this predatory war, will lead to popular uprisings under the leadership of the proletariat against the power of finance capital, against the big banks, against the capitalists; and these

upheavals cannot end otherwise than with the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, with the victory of socialism.

We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution. But I can, I believe, express the confident hope that the youth which is working so splendidly in the socialist movement of Switzerland, and of the whole world, will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win, in the coming proletarian revolution.

Written in German  
before January 9 (22),  
1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 23,  
pp. 236-53

## *From Letters From Afar\**

### FIRST LETTER

#### **The First Stage of the First Revolution**

The first revolution engendered by the imperialist world war has broken out. The first revolution but certainly not the last.

Judging by the scanty information available in Switzerland, the first stage of this first revolution, namely, of the *Russian* revolution of March 1, 1917, has ended. This first stage of our revolution will certainly not be the last.

How could such a "miracle" have happened, that in only eight days—the period indicated by Mr. Milyukov in his boastful telegram to all Russia's representatives abroad—a monarchy collapsed that had maintained itself for centuries, and that in spite of everything had managed to maintain itself throughout the three years of the tremendous, nation-wide class battles of 1905-07?

There are no miracles in nature or history, but every abrupt turn in history, and this applies to every revolution, presents such a wealth of content, unfolds such unexpected

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\* When the February 1917 revolution broke out, Lenin was living as an émigré in Switzerland. As soon as the first news of the revolution in Russia reached him, Lenin began work on his "Letters from Afar" for the newspaper *Pravda* which again began to appear in Petrograd. The first and second "Letters from Afar" were sent to Alexandra Kollontai in Christiania (Oslo), who brought them to Petrograd. The first letter appeared in *Pravda* on March 21 and 22 (April 3 and 4), 1917. The second, third, fourth and the unfinished fifth letters were not published in 1917.—Ed.



and specific combinations of forms of struggle and alignment of forces of the contestants, that to the lay mind there is much that must appear miraculous.

The combination of a number of factors of world-historic importance was required for the tsarist monarchy to have collapsed in a few days. We shall mention the chief of them.

Without the tremendous class battles and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years 1905-07, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its *initial stage* was completed in a few days. The first revolution (1905) deeply ploughed the soil, uprooted age-old prejudices, awakened millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants to political life and political struggle and revealed to each other—and to the world—all classes (and all the principal parties) of Russian society in their true character and in the true alignment of their interests, their forces, their modes of action, and their immediate and ultimate aims. This first revolution, and the succeeding period of counter-revolution (1907-14), laid bare the very essence of the tsarist monarchy, brought it to the “utmost limit”, exposed all the rottenness and infamy, the cynicism and corruption of the tsar’s clique, dominated by that monster, Rasputin. It exposed all the bestiality of the Romanov family—those pogrom-mongers who drenched Russia in the blood of Jews, workers and revolutionaries, those *landlords*, “first among peers”, *who own millions* of dessiatines of land and are prepared to stoop to any brutality, to any crime, to ruin and strangle any number of citizens in order to preserve the “sacred right of property” for themselves *and their class*.

Without the Revolution of 1905-07 and the counter-revolution of 1907-14, there could not have been that clear “self-determination” of all classes of the Russian people and of the nations inhabiting Russia, that determination of the relations of these classes to each other and to the tsarist monarchy, which manifested itself during the eight days of

the February-March Revolution of 1917. This eight-day revolution was "performed", if we may use a metaphorical expression, as though after a dozen major and minor rehearsals; the "actors" knew each other, their parts, their places and their setting in every detail, through and through, down to every more or less important shade of political trend and mode of action.

For the first great Revolution of 1905, which the Guchkovs and Milyukovs and their hangers-on denounced as a "great rebellion", led, after the lapse of twelve years, to the "brilliant", the "glorious" Revolution of 1917—the Guchkovs and Milyukovs have proclaimed it "glorious" because it has put them in power (*for the time being*). But this required a great, mighty and all-powerful "stage manager", capable, on the one hand, of vastly accelerating the course of world history, and, on the other, of engendering world-wide crises of unparalleled intensity—economic, political, national and international. Apart from an extraordinary acceleration of world history, it was also necessary that history make particularly abrupt turns, in order that at one such turn the filthy and blood-stained cart of the Romanov monarchy should be overturned at *one stroke*.

This all-powerful "stage manager", this mighty accelerator was the imperialist world war.

That it is a world war is now indisputable, for the United States and China are already half-involved today, and will be fully involved tomorrow.

That it is an imperialist war on *both* sides is now likewise indisputable. Only the capitalists and their hangers-on, the social-patriots and social-chauvinists, or—if instead of general critical definitions we use political names familiar in Russia—only the Guchkovs and Lvovs, Milyukovs and Shingaryovs on the one hand, and only the Gvozdyovs, Potresovs, Chkhenkelis, Kerenskys and Chkheidzes on the other, can deny or gloss over this fact. *Both* the German and the Anglo-French bourgeoisie are waging the war for the plunder of foreign countries and the strangling of small nations, for

financial world supremacy and the division and redivision of colonies, and in order to save the tottering capitalist regime by misleading and dividing the workers of the various countries.

The imperialist war was bound, with objective inevitability, immensely to accelerate and intensify to an unprecedented degree the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie; it was bound to turn into a civil war between the hostile classes.

This *transformation has been started* by the February-March Revolution of 1917, the first stage of which has been marked, firstly, by a joint blow at tsarism struck by two forces: one, the whole of bourgeois and landlord Russia, with all her unconscious hangers-on and all her conscious leaders, the British and French ambassadors and capitalists, and the other, *the Soviet of Workers' Deputies*, which has begun to win over the soldiers' and peasants' deputies.

These three political camps, these three fundamental political forces—(1) the tsarist monarchy, the head of the feudal landlords, of the old bureaucracy and the military caste; (2) bourgeois and landlord-Octoberist-Cadet Russia, behind which trailed the petty bourgeoisie (of which Kerensky and Chkheidze are the principal representatives); (3) the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, which is seeking to make the entire proletariat and the entire mass of the poorest part of the population its allies—these three *fundamental* political forces fully and clearly revealed themselves even in the eight days of the “first stage” and even to an observer so remote from the scene of events as the present writer, who is obliged to content himself with the meagre foreign press dispatches.

But before dealing with this in greater detail, I must return to the part of my letter devoted to a factor of prime importance, namely, the imperialist world war.

The war shackled the belligerent powers, the belligerent groups of capitalists, the “bosses” of the capitalist system, the slave-owners of the capitalist slave system, to each other

with *chains of iron*. *One bloody clot*—such is the social and political life of the present moment in history.

The socialists who deserted to the bourgeoisie on the outbreak of the war—all these Davids and Scheidemanns in Germany and the Plekhanovs, Potresovs, Gvozdyovs and Co. in Russia—clamoured loud and long against the “illusions” of the revolutionaries, against the “illusions” of the Basle Manifesto, against the “farcical dream”\* of turning the imperialist war into a civil war. They sang praises in every key to the strength, tenacity and adaptability allegedly revealed by capitalism—*they*, who had aided the capitalists to “adapt”, tame, mislead and divide the working classes of the various countries!

But “he who laughs last laughs best”. The bourgeoisie has been unable to delay for long the revolutionary crisis engendered by the war. That crisis is growing with irresistible force in all countries, beginning with Germany, which, according to an observer who recently visited that country, is suffering “brilliantly organised famine”, and ending with England and France, where *famine is also* looming, but where organisation is far less “brilliant”.

It was natural that the revolutionary crisis should have broken out *first of all* in tsarist Russia, where the disorganisation was most appalling and the proletariat most revolutionary (not by virtue of any special qualities, but because of the living traditions of 1905). This crisis was precipitated by the series of extremely severe defeats sustained by Russia and her allies. They shook up the old machinery of government and the old order and roused the anger of *all* classes of the population against them; they embittered the army, wiped out a very large part of the old commanding personnel, composed of die-hard aristocrats and exceptionally corrupt bureaucratic elements, and replaced it by a young,

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\* This expression, which is a quotation from a poem by the decadent poet Igor Severyanin, was used by Plekhanov in his polemics with the Bolsheviks.—*Ed.*

fresh, mainly bourgeois, commoner, petty-bourgeois personnel. Those who, grovelling to the bourgeoisie or simply lacking backbone, howled and wailed about "defeatism", are now faced by the fact of the historical connection between the defeat of the most backward and barbarous tsarist monarchy and the *beginning* of the revolutionary conflagration.

But while the defeats early in the war were a negative factor that precipitated the upheaval, the *connection* between Anglo-French finance capital, Anglo-French imperialism, and Russian Octobrist-Cadet capital was a factor that hastened this crisis by the direct *organisation of a plot* against Nicholas Romanov.

This highly important aspect of the situation is, for obvious reasons, hushed up by the Anglo-French press and maliciously emphasised by the German. We Marxists must soberly face the truth and not allow ourselves to be confused either by the lies, the official sugary diplomatic and ministerial lies, of the first group of imperialist belligerents, or by the sniggering and smirking of their financial and military rivals of the other belligerent group. The whole course of events in the February-March Revolution clearly shows that the British and French embassies, with their agents and "connections", who had long been making the most desperate efforts to prevent "separate" agreements and a separate peace between Nicholas II (and last, we hope, and we will endeavour to make him that) and Wilhelm II, directly organised a plot in conjunction with the Octobrists and Cadets, in conjunction with a section of the generals and army and St. Petersburg garrison officers, with the express object of *deposing* Nicholas Romanov.

Let us not harbour any illusions. Let us not make the mistake of those who—like certain O.C. supporters or Mensheviks who are oscillating between Gvozdyov-Potresov policy and internationalism and only too often slip into petty-bourgeois pacifism—are now ready to extol "agreement" between the workers' party and the Cadets, "support" of the latter by the former, etc. In conformity with the old (and

by no means Marxist) doctrine that they have learned by rote, they are trying to veil the plot of the Anglo-French imperialists and the Guchkovs and Milyukovs aimed at deposing the "chief warrior", Nicholas Romanov, and putting more energetic, fresh and more capable *warriors* in his place.

That the revolution succeeded so quickly and—seemingly, at the first superficial glance—so radically, is only due to the fact that, as a result of an extremely unique historical situation, *absolutely dissimilar currents, absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely contrary political and social strivings have merged*, and in a strikingly "harmonious" manner. Namely, the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists, who impelled Milyukov, Guchkov and Co. to seize power *for the purpose of continuing the imperialist war*, for the purpose of conducting the war still more ferociously and obstinately, for the purpose of *slaughtering fresh millions* of Russian workers and peasants in order that the Guchkovs might obtain Constantinople, the French capitalists Syria, the British capitalists Mesopotamia, and so on. This on the one hand. On the other, there was a profound proletarian and mass popular movement of a revolutionary character (a movement of the entire poorest section of the population of town and country) for *bread, for peace, for real freedom*.

It would simply be foolish to speak of the revolutionary proletariat of Russia "supporting" the Cadet-Octobrist imperialism, which has been "patched up" with English money and is as abominable as tsarist imperialism. The revolutionary workers were destroying, have already destroyed to a considerable degree and will destroy to its foundations the infamous tsarist *monarchy*. They are neither elated nor dismayed by the fact that at certain brief and exceptional historical conjunctures *they were aided* by the struggle of Buchanan, Guchkov, Milyukov and Co. to *replace* one monarch by *another monarch*, also preferably a Romanov!

Such, and only such, is the way the situation developed. Such, and only such, is the view that can be taken by a politician who does not fear the truth, who soberly weighs the

balance of social forces in the revolution, who appraises every "current situation" not only from the standpoint of all its present, current peculiarities, but also from the standpoint of the more fundamental motivations, the deeper interest-relationship of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, both in Russia and throughout the world.

The workers of Petrograd, like the workers of the whole of Russia, self-sacrificingly fought the tsarist monarchy—fought for freedom, land for the peasants, and *for peace*, against the imperialist slaughter. To continue and intensify that slaughter, Anglo-French imperialist capital hatched Court intrigues, conspired with the officers of the Guards, incited and encouraged the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, and fixed up a *complete new government*, which in fact *did seize power* immediately the proletarian struggle had struck the first blows at tsarism.

This new government, in which Lvov and Guchkov of the Octobrists and Peaceful Renovation Party, yesterday's abettors of Stolypin the Hangman, control *really important* posts, vital posts, decisive posts, the army and the bureaucracy—this government, in which Milyukov and the other Cadets are more than anything decorations, a signboard—they are there to deliver sentimental professorial speeches—and in which the Trudovik Kerensky is a balalaika on which they play to deceive the workers and peasants—this government is not a fortuitous assemblage of persons.

They are representatives of the new class that has risen to political power in Russia, the class of capitalist landlords and bourgeoisie which has long been *ruling* our country economically, and which during the Revolution of 1905-07, the counter-revolutionary period of 1907-14, and finally—and with especial rapidity—the war period of 1914-17, was quick to organise itself politically, taking over control of the local government bodies, public education, congresses of various types, the Duma, the war industries committees, etc. This new class was already "almost completely" *in power* by 1917, and therefore it needed only the first blows to bring

tsarism to the ground and clear the way for the bourgeoisie. The imperialist war, which required an incredible exertion of effort, so accelerated the course of backward Russia's development that we have "at one blow" (*seemingly* at one blow) *taught up* with Italy, England, and almost with France. We have obtained a "coalition", a "national" (i.e., adapted for carrying on the imperialist slaughter and for fooling the people) "parliamentary" government.

Side by side with this government—which as regards the *present* war is but the agent of the billion-dollar "firm" "England and France"—there has arisen the chief, unofficial, as yet undeveloped and comparatively weak *workers' government*, which expresses the interests of the proletariat and of the entire poor section of the urban and rural population. This is the *Soviet of Workers' Deputies* in Petrograd, which is seeking connections with the soldiers and peasants, and also with the agricultural workers, with the latter particularly and primarily, of course, more than with the peasants.

Such is the *actual* political situation, which we must first endeavour to define with the greatest possible objective precision, in order that Marxist tactics may be based upon the only possible solid foundation—the foundation of *facts*.

The tsarist monarchy has been smashed, but not finally destroyed.

The Octobrist-Cadet bourgeois government, which wants to fight the imperialist war "to a finish", and which in reality is the agent of the financial firm "England and France", is *obliged to promise* the people the maximum of liberties and sops compatible with the maintenance of its power over the people and the possibility of continuing the imperialist slaughter.

The Soviet of Workers' Deputies is an organisation of the workers, the embryo of a workers' government, the representative of the interests of the entire mass of the *poor* section of the population, i.e., of nine-tenths of the population, which is striving for *peace, bread and freedom*.



The conflict of these three forces determines the situation that has now arisen, a situation that is *transitional* from the first stage of the revolution to the second.

The antagonism between the first and second force is *not* profound, it is temporary, the result *solely* of the present conjuncture of circumstances, of the abrupt turn of events in the imperialist war. The *whole* of the new government is monarchist, for Kerensky's *verbal* republicanism simply cannot be taken seriously, is not worthy of a statesman and, *objectively*, is political chicanery. The new government, which has not dealt the tsarist monarchy the final blow, has already *begun to strike a bargain* with the landlord Romanov dynasty. The bourgeoisie of the Octobrist-Cadet type *needs* a monarchy to serve as the head of the bureaucracy and the army in order to protect the privileges of capital against the working people.

He who says that the workers must *support* the new government in the interests of the struggle against tsarist reaction (and apparently this is being said by the Potresovs, Gvozdyovs, Chkhenkelis and also, all *evasiveness* notwithstanding, by *Chkheidze*) is a traitor to the workers, a traitor to the cause of the proletariat, to the cause of peace and freedom. For actually, *precisely* this new government is *already* bound hand and foot by imperialist capital, by the imperialist policy of *war* and plunder, has *already* begun to strike a bargain (without consulting the people!) with the dynasty, *is already working to restore the tsarist monarchy*, is already soliciting the candidature of Mikhail Romanov as the new kinglet, is already taking measures to prop up the throne, to substitute for the legitimate (lawful, ruling by virtue of the old law) monarchy a Bonapartist, plebiscite monarchy (ruling by virtue of a fraudulent plebiscite).

No, if there is to be a real struggle against the tsarist monarchy, if freedom is to be guaranteed in fact and not merely in words, in the glib promises of Milyukov and Kerensky, the workers must *not* support the new government; the government must "support" the workers! For the only

*guarantee* of freedom and of the complete destruction of tsarism lies in *arming the proletariat*, in strengthening, extending and developing the role, significance and power of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies.

All the rest is mere phrase-mongering and lies, self-deception on the part of the politicians of the liberal and radical camp, fraudulent trickery.

Help, or at least do not hinder, the arming of the workers, and freedom in Russia will be invincible, the monarchy irrestorable, the republic secure.

Otherwise the Guchkovs and Milyukovs will restore the monarchy and grant *none*, absolutely none of the "liberties" they promised. All bourgeois politicians in *all* bourgeois revolutions "fed" the people and fooled the workers with promises.

Ours is a bourgeois revolution, *therefore*, the workers must support the bourgeoisie, say the Potresovs, Gvozdyovs and Chkheidzes, as Plekhanov said yesterday.

Ours is a bourgeois revolution, we Marxists say, *therefore*, the workers must open the eyes of the people to the deception practised by the bourgeois politicians, teach them to put no faith in words, to depend entirely on their *own* strength, their *own* organisation, their *own* unity, and their *own* weapons.

The government of the Octobrists and Cadets, of the Guchkovs and Milyukovs, *cannot*, even if it sincerely wanted to (only infants can think that Guchkov and Lvov are sincere), *cannot* give the people *either peace, bread, or freedom*.

It cannot give peace because it is a war government, a government for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter, a government of *plunder*, out to plunder Armenia, Galicia and Turkey, annex Constantinople, reconquer Poland, Courland, Lithuania, etc. It is a government bound hand and foot by Anglo-French imperialist capital. Russian capital is merely a branch of the world-wide "firm" which manipulates *hundreds of billions* of rubles and is called "England and France".

It cannot give bread because it is a bourgeois government. *At best*, it can give the people "brilliantly organised famine", as Germany has done. But the people will not accept famine. They will learn, and probably very soon, that there is bread and that it can be obtained, but only by methods that *do not respect the sanctity of capital and landownership*.

It cannot give freedom because it is a landlord and capitalist government which *fears* the people and has already begun to strike a bargain with the Romanov dynasty.

The tactical problems of our immediate attitude towards this government will be dealt with in another article. In it, we shall explain the peculiarity of the present situation, which is a *transition* from the first stage of the revolution to the second, and why the slogan, the "task of the day", at *this* moment must be: *Workers, you have performed miracles of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsarism. You must perform miracles of organisation, organisation of the proletariat and of the whole people, to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution.*

Confining ourselves for the *present* to an analysis of the class struggle and the alignment of class forces at this stage of the revolution, we have still to put the question: who are the proletariat's *allies* in *this* revolution?

It has *two* allies: first, the broad mass of the semi-proletarian and partly also of the small-peasant population, who number scores of millions and constitute the overwhelming majority of the population of Russia. For this mass peace, bread, freedom and land are *essential*. It is inevitable that to a certain extent this mass will be under the influence of the bourgeoisie, particularly of the petty bourgeoisie, to which it is most akin in its conditions of life, vacillating between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel lessons of war, and they will be *the more* cruel the more vigorously the war is prosecuted by Guchkov, Lvov, Milyukov and Co., will *inevitably* push this mass towards the proletariat, compel it to follow the proletariat. We must now take advantage

of the relative freedom of the new order and of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies to *enlighten* and *organise* this mass first of all and above all. Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and Soviets of Agricultural Workers—that is one of our most urgent tasks. In this connection we shall strive not only for the agricultural workers to establish their own separate Soviets, but also for the propertyless and poorest peasants to organise *separately* from the well-to-do peasants. The special tasks and special forms of organisation urgently needed at the present time will be dealt with in the next letter.

Second, the ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of all the belligerent countries and of all countries in general. At present this ally is to a large degree repressed by the war, and all too often the European social-chauvinists speak in its name—men who, like Plekhanov, Gvozdyov and Potresov in Russia, have deserted to the bourgeoisie. But the liberation of the proletariat from their influence has progressed with every month of the imperialist war, and the Russian revolution will *inevitably* immensely hasten this process.

With these two allies, the proletariat, *utilising the peculiarities* of the present transition situation, can and will proceed, first, to the achievement of a democratic republic and complete victory of the peasantry over the landlords, instead of the Guchkov-Milyukov semi-monarchy, and then to *socialism*, which alone can give the war-weary people *peace, bread and freedom*.

Written on March 7 (20),  
1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 23,  
pp. 297-308

FROM THE FIFTH LETTER

## **The Tasks Involved in the Building of the Revolutionary Proletarian State**

In the preceding letters, the immediate tasks of the revolutionary proletariat in Russia were formulated as follows: (1) to find the surest road to the next stage of the revolution, or to the second revolution, which (2) must transfer political power from the government of the landlords and capitalists (the Guchkovs, Lvovs, Milyukovs, Kerenskys) to a government of the workers and poorest peasants. (3) This latter government must be organised on the model of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, namely, (4) it must smash, completely eliminate, the old state machine, the army, the police force and bureaucracy (officialdom), that is common to *all* bourgeois states, and substitute for this machine (5) not only a mass organisation, but a universal organisation of the entire armed people. (6) *Only* such a government, of "such" a class composition ("revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry") and such organs of government ("proletarian militia") *will be capable* of successfully carrying out the extremely difficult and absolutely urgent *chief* task of the moment, namely: to achieve *peace*, not an imperialist peace, not a deal between the imperialist powers concerning the division of the booty by the capitalists and their governments, but a really lasting and democratic peace, which cannot be achieved without a proletarian revolution in a number of countries. (7) In Russia the victory of the proletariat can be achieved in the very near future *only* if, from the very first step, the workers

are supported by the vast majority of the peasants fighting for the confiscation of the landed estates (and for the nationalisation of all the land, if we assume that the agrarian programme of the "104" is still essentially the agrarian programme of the *peasantry*). (8) In connection with such a peasant revolution, and on its basis, the proletariat can and must, in alliance with the *poorest* section of the peasantry, take further steps towards *control* of the production and distribution of the basic products, towards the introduction of "universal labour service", etc. These steps are dictated, with absolute inevitability, by the conditions created by the war, which in many respects will become still more acute in the post-war period. In their entirety and in their development these steps will mark the *transition to socialism*, which cannot be achieved in Russia directly, at one stroke, without transitional measures, but is quite achievable and urgently necessary as a result of such transitional measures. (9) In this connection, the task of immediately organising special Soviets of Workers' Deputies in the *rural districts*, i.e., Soviets of agricultural *wage-workers separate* from the Soviets of the other peasant deputies, comes to the forefront with extreme urgency.

Such, briefly, is the programme we have outlined, based on an appraisal of the class forces in the Russian and world revolution, and also on the experience of 1871 and 1905.

Written on March 26  
(April 8), 1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 23,  
pp. 340-41

# ***From The State and Revolution***

*The Marxist Theory of the State  
and the Tasks of the Proletariat  
in the Revolution*

## **CHAPTER III**

### **The State and Revolution. Experience of the Paris Commune of 1871. Marx's Analysis**

#### **1. What Made the Communards' Attempt Heroic?**

It is well known that in the autumn of 1870, a few months before the Commune, Marx warned the Paris workers that any attempt to overthrow the government would be the folly of despair.\* But when, in March 1871, a decisive battle was *forced* upon the workers and they accepted it, when the uprising had become a fact, Marx greeted the proletarian revolution with the greatest enthusiasm, in spite of unfavourable auguries. Marx did not persist in the pedantic attitude of condemning an "untimely" movement as did the ill-famed Russian renegade from Marxism, Plekhanov, who in November 1905 wrote encouragingly about the workers' and peasants' struggle, but after December 1905 cried, in liberal fashion: "They should not have taken up arms."

Marx, however, was not only enthusiastic about the heroism of the Communards, who, as he expressed it, "stormed heaven". Although the mass revolutionary movement did not achieve its aim, he regarded it as a historic experience of enormous importance, as a certain advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programmes and arguments. Marx endeavoured to analyse this experiment, to draw tac-

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\* The reference is to the "Second Address of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association on the Franco-Prussian War".—*Ed.*

tical lessons from it and re-examine his theory in the light of it.

The only "correction" Marx thought it necessary to make to the *Communist Manifesto* he made on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, signed by both its authors, is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the programme of the *Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become out-of-date", and they go on to say:

"...One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes'...."

The authors took the words that are in single quotation marks in this passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*.

Thus, Marx and Engels regarded one principal and fundamental lesson of the Paris Commune as being of such enormous importance that they introduced it as an important correction into the *Communist Manifesto*.

Most characteristically, it is this important correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning probably is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine-hundredths, of the readers of the *Communist Manifesto*. We shall deal with this distortion more fully farther on, in a chapter devoted specially to distortions. Here it will be sufficient to note that the current, vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous statement just quoted is that Marx here allegedly emphasises the idea of slow development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, *the exact opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the "ready-made state machinery", and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.



On April 12, 1871, i.e., just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

"If you look up the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to *smash* it [Marx's italics—the original is *zerbrechen*], and this is the precondition for every real people's revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting." (*Neue Zeit*, Vol. XX, 1, 1901-02, p. 709.) (The letters of Marx to Kugelmann have appeared in Russian in no less than two editions, one of which I edited and supplied with a preface.)

The words, "to smash the bureaucratic-military machine", briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism regarding the tasks of the proletariat during a revolution in relation to the state. And it is this lesson that has been not only completely ignored, but positively distorted by the prevailing, Kautskyite, "interpretation" of Marxism!

As for Marx's reference to *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, we have quoted the relevant passage in full above.

It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he restricts his conclusion to the Continent. This was understandable in 1871, when Britain was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without a militarist clique and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Marx therefore excluded Britain, where a revolution, even a people's revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, *without* the precondition of destroying the "ready-made state machinery".

Today, in 1917, at the time of the first great imperialist war, this restriction made by Marx is no longer valid. Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon "liberty", in

the sense that they had no militarist cliques and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves, and suppress everything. Today, in Britain and America, too, "the precondition for every real people's revolution" is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the "ready-made state machinery" (made and brought up to "European", general imperialist, perfection in those countries in the years 1914-17).

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is "the precondition for every real *people's* revolution". This idea of a "people's" revolution seems strange coming from Marx, so that the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a "slip of the pen" on Marx's part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution, and even this antithesis they interpret in an utterly lifeless way.

If we take the revolutions of the twentieth century as examples we shall, of course, have to admit that the Portuguese and the Turkish revolutions are both bourgeois revolutions. Neither of them, however, is a "people's" revolution, since in neither does the mass of the people, their vast majority, come out actively, independently, with their own economic and political demands to any noticeable degree. By contrast, although the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905-07 displayed no such "brilliant" successes as at times fell to the Portuguese and Turkish revolutions, it was undoubtedly a "real people's" revolution, since the mass of the people, their majority, the very lowest social groups, crushed by oppression and exploitation, rose independently and stamped on the entire course of the revolution the imprint of *their* own demands, *their* attempts to build in

their own way a new society in place of the old society that was being destroyed.

In Europe, in 1871, the proletariat did not constitute the majority of the people in any country on the Continent. A "people's" revolution, one actually sweeping the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasants. These two classes then constituted the "people". These two classes are united by the fact that the "bureaucratic-military-state machine" oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To *smash* this machine, to *break it up*, is truly in the interest of the "people", of their majority, of the workers and most of the peasants, is "the precondition" for a free alliance of the poor peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible.

As is well known, the Paris Commune was actually working its way toward such an alliance, although it did not reach its goal owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external.

Consequently, in speaking of a "real people's revolution", Marx, without in the least discounting the special features of the petty bourgeoisie (he spoke a great deal about them and often), took strict account of the actual balance of class forces in most of the continental countries of Europe in 1871. On the other hand, he stated that the "smashing" of the state machine was required by the interests of both the workers and the peasants, that it united them, that it placed before them the common task of removing the "parasite" and of replacing it by something new.

By what exactly?

## 2. What Is to Replace the Smashed State Machine?

In 1847, in the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx's answer to this question was as yet a purely abstract one; to be exact, it was an answer that indicated the tasks, but not the ways of accomplishing them. The answer given in the *Communist*

*Manifesto* was that this machine was to be replaced by "the proletariat organised as the ruling class", by the "winning of the battle of democracy".

Marx did not indulge in utopias; he expected the *experience* of the mass movement to provide the reply to the question as to the specific forms this organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class would assume and as to the exact manner in which this organisation would be combined with the most complete, most consistent "winning of the battle of democracy".

Marx subjected the experience of the Commune, meagre as it was, to the most careful analysis in *The Civil War in France*. Let us quote the most important passages of this work.

Originating from the Middle Ages, there developed in the nineteenth century "the centralised state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature". With the development of class antagonisms between capital and labour, "state power assumed more and more the character of a public force for the suppression of the working class, of a machine of class rule. After every revolution, which marks an advance in the class struggle, the purely coercive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief". After the revolution of 1848-49, state power became "the national war instrument of capital against labour". The Second Empire consolidated this.

"The direct antithesis to the empire was the Commune." It was the "specific form" of "a republic that was not only to remove the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself. . . ."

What was this "specific" form of the proletarian, socialist republic? What was the state it began to create?

"...The first decree of the Commune ... was the suppression of the standing army, and its replacement by the armed people...."

This demand now figures in the programme of every party calling itself socialist. The real worth of their programmes, however, is best shown by the behaviour of our Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who, right after the revolution of February 27, actually refused to carry out this demand!

"The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of Paris, responsible and revocable at any time. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class.... The police, which until then had been the instrument of the Government, was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable instrument of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The privileges and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the dignitaries themselves.... Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the instruments of the physical force of the old Government, the Commune proceeded at once to break the instrument of spiritual suppression, the power of the priests.... The judicial functionaries lost that sham independence... they were thenceforward to be elective, responsible, and revocable...."

The Commune, therefore, appears to have replaced the smashed state machine "only" by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other insti-

tutions of a fundamentally different type. This is exactly a case of "quantity being transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (=a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper.

It is still necessary to suppress the bourgeoisie and crush their resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons for its defeat was that it did not do this with sufficient determination. The organ of suppression, however, is here the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage slavery. And since the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors, a "special force" for suppression is *no longer necessary*! In this sense, the state *begins to wither away*. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officialdom, the chiefs of the standing army), the majority itself can directly fulfil all these functions, and the more the functions of state power are performed by the people as a whole, the less need there is for the existence of this power.

In this connection, the following measures of the Commune, emphasised by Marx, are particularly noteworthy: the abolition of all representation allowances, and of all monetary privileges to officials, the reduction of the remuneration of *all* servants of the state to the level of "*workmen's wages*". This shows more clearly than anything else the *turn* from bourgeois to proletarian democracy, from the democracy of the oppressors to that of the oppressed classes, from the state as a "*special force*" for the suppression of a particular class to the suppression of the oppressors by the *general force* of the majority of the people—the workers and the peasants. And it is on this particularly striking point, perhaps the most important as far as the problem of the state is concerned, that the ideas of Marx have been most completely ignored! In popular commentaries, the

number of which is legion, this is not mentioned. The thing done is to keep silent about it as if it were a piece of old-fashioned "naïveté", just as Christians, after their religion had been given the status of a state religion, "forgot" the "naïveté" of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit.

The reduction of the remuneration of high state officials seems to be "simply" a demand of naïve, primitive democracy. One of the "founders" of modern opportunism, the ex-Social-Democrat Eduard Bernstein, has more than once repeated the vulgar bourgeois jeers at "primitive" democracy. Like all opportunists, and like the present Kautskyites, he did not understand at all that, first of all, the transition from capitalism to socialism is *impossible* without a certain "reversion" to "primitive" democracy (for how else can the majority, and then the whole population without exception, proceed to discharge state functions?); and that, secondly, "primitive democracy" based on capitalism and capitalist culture is not the same as primitive democracy in prehistoric or precapitalist times. Capitalist culture has *created* large-scale production, factories, railways, the postal service, telephones, etc., and *on this basis* the great majority of the functions of the old "state power" have become so simplified and can be reduced to such exceedingly simple operations of registration, filing and checking that they can be easily performed by every literate person, can quite easily be performed for ordinary "workmen's wages", and that these functions can (and must) be stripped of every shadow of privilege, of every semblance of "official grandeur".

All officials, without exception, elected and subject to recall *at any time*, their salaries reduced to the level of ordinary "workmen's wages"—these simple and "self-evident" democratic measures, while completely uniting the interests of the workers and the majority of the peasants, at the same time serve as a bridge leading from capitalism to socialism. These measures concern the reorganisation of the state, the purely political reorganisation of society; but,

of course, they acquire their full meaning and significance only in connection with the "expropriation of the expropriators" either being accomplished or in preparation, i.e., with the transformation of capitalist private ownership of the means of production into social ownership.

"The Commune," Marx wrote, "made that catch-word of all bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality, by abolishing the two greatest sources of expenditure—the army and the officialdom."

From the peasants, as from other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, only an insignificant few "rise to the top", "get on in the world" in the bourgeois sense, i.e., become either well-to-do, bourgeois, or officials in secure and privileged positions. In every capitalist country where there are peasants (as there are in most capitalist countries), the vast majority of them are oppressed by the government and long for its overthrow, long for "cheap" government. This can be achieved *only* by the proletariat; and by achieving it, the proletariat at the same time takes a step towards the socialist reorganisation of the state.

### 3. Abolition of Parliamentarism

"The Commune," Marx wrote, "was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time. . . .

"Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress [ver- und zertreten] the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people constituted in communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business."

Owing to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism, made in 1871, also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of



Marxism. The professional Cabinet Ministers and parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully reasonable ground, they denounce *all* criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"!! It is not surprising that the proletariat of the "advanced" parliamentary countries, disgusted with such "socialists" as the Scheidemanns, Davids, Legiens, Sembats, Renaudels, Hendersons, Vanderveldes, Staunings, Brantings, Bissolatis and Co., has been with increasing frequency giving its sympathies to anarcho-syndicalism, in spite of the fact that the latter is merely the twin brother of opportunism.

For Marx, however, revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the "pigsty" of bourgeois parliamentarism, especially when the situation was obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuinely revolutionary proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.

But if we deal with the question of the state, and if we consider parliamentarism as one of the institutions of the state, from the point of view of the tasks of the proletariat in *this* field, what is the way out of parliamentarism? How can it be dispensed with?

Once again we must say: the lessons of Marx, based on the study of the Commune, have been so completely forgotten that the present-day "Social-Democrat" (i.e., present-day traitor to socialism) really cannot understand any criticism of parliamentarism other than anarchist or reactionary criticism.

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into "working" bodies. "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time."

"A working, not a parliamentary, body"—this is a blow straight from the shoulder at the present-day parliamentarians and parliamentary "lap dogs" of Social-Democracy! Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to Britain, Norway and so forth—in these countries the real business of "state" is performed behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries and General Staffs. Parliament is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people". This is so true that even in the Russian republic, a bourgeois-democratic republic, all these sins of parliamentarism came out at once, even before it managed to set up a real parliament. The heroes of rotten philistinism, such as the Skobelevs and Tseretelis, the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, have even succeeded in polluting the Soviets after the fashion of the most disgusting bourgeois parliamentarism, in converting them into mere talking shops. In the Soviets, the "socialist" Ministers are fooling the credulous rustics with phrase-mongering and resolutions. In the government itself a sort of permanent shuffle is going on in order that, on the one hand, as many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as possible may in turn get near the "pie", the lucrative and honourable posts, and that, on the other hand, the "attention" of the people may be "engaged". Meanwhile the chancelleries and army staffs "do" the business of "state".

*Dyelo Naroda*, the organ of the ruling Socialist-Revolutionary Party, recently admitted in a leading article—with the matchless frankness of people of "good society", in which "all" are engaged in political prostitution—that even in the ministries headed by the "socialists" (save the mark!), the

whole bureaucratic apparatus is in fact unchanged, is working in the old way and quite "freely" sabotaging revolutionary measures! Even without this admission, does not the actual history of the participation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the government prove this? It is noteworthy, however, that in the ministerial company of the Cadets, the Chernovs, Rusanovs, Zenzinovs and the other editors of *Dyelo Naroda* have so completely lost all sense of shame as to brazenly assert, as if it were a mere bagatelle, that in "their" ministries everything is unchanged!! Revolutionary-democratic phrases to gull the rural Simple Simons, and bureaucracy and red tape to "gladden the hearts" of the capitalists—that is the *essence* of the "honest" coalition.

The Commune substitutes for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion does not degenerate into deception, for the parliamentarians themselves have to work, have to execute their own laws, have themselves to test the results achieved in reality, and to account directly to their constituents. Representative institutions remain, but there is *no* parliamentarism here as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for the deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy, without representative institutions, but we can and *must* imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our earnest and sincere desire, and not a mere "election" cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and also the Scheidemanns and Legiens, the Sembats and Vanderfeldes.

It is extremely instructive to note that, in speaking of the functions of *those* officials who are necessary for the Commune and for proletarian democracy, Marx compares them to the workers of "every other employer", that is, of the

ordinary capitalist enterprise, with its "workers, foremen and accountants".

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he made up or invented a "new" society. No, he studied the *birth* of the new society *out of* the old, and the forms of transition from the latter to the former, as a natural-historical process. He examined the actual experience of a mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He "learned" from the Commune, just as all the great revolutionary thinkers learned unhesitatingly from the experience of great movements of the oppressed classes, and never addressed them with pedantic "homilies" (such as Plekhanov's: "They should not have taken up arms" or Tsereteli's: "A class must limit itself").

Abolishing the bureaucracy at once, everywhere and completely, is out of the question. It is a utopia. But to *smash* the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will make possible the gradual abolition of all bureaucracy—this is *not* a utopia, it is the experience of the Commune, the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat.

Capitalism simplifies the functions of "state" administration; it makes it possible to cast "bossing" aside and to confine the whole matter to the organisation of the proletarians (as the ruling class), which will hire "workers, foremen and accountants" in the name of the whole of society.

We are not utopians, we do not "dream" of dispensing *at once* with all administration, with all subordination. These anarchist dreams, based upon incomprehension of the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, are totally alien to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, serve only to postpone the socialist revolution until people are different. No, we want the socialist revolution with people as they are now, with people who cannot dispense with subordination, control and "foremen and accountants".

The subordination, however, must be to the armed vanguard of all the exploited and working people, i.e., to the

proletariat. A beginning can and must be made at once, overnight, to replace the specific "bossing" of state officials by the simple functions of "foremen and accountants", functions which are already fully within the ability of the average town dweller and can well be performed for "workmen's wages".

*We*, the workers, shall organise large-scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created, relying on our own experience as workers, establishing strict, iron discipline backed up by the state power of the armed workers. We shall reduce the role of state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, modestly paid "foremen and accountants" (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees). This is *our* proletarian task, this is what we can and must *start* with in accomplishing the proletarian revolution. Such a beginning, on the basis of large-scale production, will of itself lead to the gradual "withering away" of all bureaucracy, to the gradual creation of an order—an order without inverted commas, an order bearing no similarity to wage slavery—an order under which the functions of control and accounting, becoming more and more simple, will be performed by each in turn, will then become a habit and will finally die out as the *special* functions of a special section of the population.

A witty German Social-Democrat of the seventies of the last century called the *postal service* an example of the socialist economic system. This is very true. At present the postal service is a business organised on the lines of a state-capitalist monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organisations of a similar type, in which, standing over the "common" people, who are overworked and starved, one has the same bourgeois bureaucracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Once we have overthrown the capitalists, crushed the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, and smashed the bureaucratic machine of

the modern state, we shall have a splendidly-equipped mechanism, freed from the "parasite", a mechanism which can very well be set going by the united workers themselves, who will hire technicians, foremen and accountants, and pay them *all*, as indeed *all* "state" officials in general, workmen's wages. Here is a concrete, practical task which can immediately be fulfilled in relation to all trusts, a task whose fulfilment will rid the working people of exploitation, a task which takes account of what the Commune had already begun to practise (particularly in building up the state).

To organise the *whole* economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as *all* officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "a workman's wage", all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat—this is our immediate aim. This is the state and this is the economic foundation we need. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the labouring classes of the bourgeoisie's prostitution of these institutions.

#### 4. Organisation of National Unity

"In a brief sketch of national organisation which the Commune had no time to develop, it states explicitly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest village..." The communes were to elect the "National Delegation" in Paris.

"...The few but important functions which would still remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been deliberately mis-stated, but were to be transferred to communal, i.e., strictly responsible, officials.

"...National unity was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, organised by the communal constitution; it was to become a reality by the destruction of state power which posed as the embodiment of that unity yet

wanted to be independent of, and superior to, the nation, on whose body it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority claiming the right to stand above society, and restored to the responsible servants of society."

The extent to which the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy have failed—perhaps it would be more true to say, have refused—to understand these observations of Marx is best shown by that book of Herostratean fame of the renegade Bernstein, *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of the Social-Democrats*. It is in connection with the above passage from Marx that Bernstein wrote that "as far as its political content is concerned", this programme "displays, in all its essential features, the greatest similarity to the federalism of Proudhon. . . . In spite of all the other points of difference between Marx and the 'petty-bourgeois' Proudhon [Bernstein places the word "petty-bourgeois" in inverted commas to make it sound ironical] on these points, their lines of reasoning run as close as could be". Of course, Bernstein continues, the importance of the municipalities is growing, but "it seems doubtful to me whether the first job of democracy would be such a dissolution [Auflösung] of the modern states and such a complete transformation [Umwandlung] of their organisation as is visualised by Marx and Proudhon (the formation of a National Assembly from delegates of the provincial or district assemblies, which, in their turn, would consist of delegates from the communes), so that consequently the previous mode of national representation would disappear." (Bernstein, *Premises*, German edition, 1899, pp. 134 and 136.)

To confuse Marx's views on the "destruction of state power, a parasitic excrescence", with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! But it is no accident, for it never occurs to the opportunist that Marx does not speak here at all about federalism as opposed to centralism, but about

smashing the old, bourgeois state machine which exists in all bourgeois countries.

The only thing that does occur to the opportunist is what he sees around him, in an environment of petty-bourgeois philistinism and "reformist" stagnation, namely, only "municipalities"! The opportunist has even grown out of the habit of thinking about proletarian revolution.

It is ridiculous. But the remarkable thing is that nobody argued with Bernstein on this point. Bernstein has been refuted by many, especially by Plekhanov in Russian literature and by Kautsky in European literature, but neither of them has said *anything* about *this* distortion of Marx by Bernstein.

The opportunist has so much forgotten how to think in a revolutionary way and to dwell on revolution that he attributes "federalism" to Marx, whom he confuses with the founder of anarchism, Proudhon. As for Kautsky and Plekhanov, who claim to be orthodox Marxists and defenders of the theory of revolutionary Marxism, they are silent on this point! Here is one of the roots of the extreme vulgarisation of the views on the difference between Marxism and anarchism, which is characteristic of both the Kautskyites and the opportunists, and which we shall discuss again later.

There is not a trace of federalism in Marx's above-quoted observations on the experience of the Commune. Marx agreed with Proudhon on the very point that the opportunist Bernstein did not see. Marx disagreed with Proudhon on the very point on which Bernstein found a similarity between them.

Marx agreed with Proudhon in that they both stood for the "smashing" of the modern state machine. Neither the opportunists nor the Kautskyites wish to see the similarity of views on this point between Marxism and anarchism (both Proudhon and Bakunin) because this is where they have departed from Marxism.

Marx disagreed both with Proudhon and Bakunin precisely on the question of federalism (not to mention the dictatorship of the proletariat). Federalism as a principle follows



logically from the petty-bourgeois views of anarchism. Marx was a centralist. There is no departure whatever from centralism in his observations just quoted. Only those who are imbued with the philistine "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake the destruction of the bourgeois state machine for the destruction of centralism!

Now if the proletariat and the poor peasants take state power into their own hands, organise themselves quite freely in communes, and *unite* the action of all the communes in striking at capital, in crushing the resistance of the capitalists, and in transferring the privately-owned railways, factories, land and so on to the *entire* nation, to the whole of society, won't that be centralism? Won't that be the most consistent democratic centralism and, moreover, proletarian centralism?

Bernstein simply cannot conceive of the possibility of voluntary centralism, of the voluntary amalgamation of the communes into a nation, of the voluntary fusion of the proletarian communes, for the purpose of destroying bourgeois rule and the bourgeois state machine. Like all philistines, Bernstein pictures centralism as something which can be imposed and maintained solely from above, and solely by the bureaucracy and the military clique.

As though foreseeing that his views might be distorted, Marx expressly emphasised that the charge that the Commune had wanted to destroy national unity, to abolish the central authority, was a deliberate fraud. Marx purposely used the words: "National unity was ... to be organised", so as to oppose conscious, democratic, proletarian centralism to bourgeois, military, bureaucratic centralism.

But there are none so deaf as those who will not hear. And the very thing the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy do not want to hear about is the destruction of state power, the amputation of the parasitic excrescence.

### 5. Abolition of the Parasite State

We have already quoted Marx's words on this subject, and we must now supplement them.

"...It is generally the fate of new historical creations," he wrote, "to be mistaken for the counterpart of older and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks [*bricht*, smashes] the modern state power, has been regarded as a revival of the medieval communes... as a federation of small states (as Montesquieu and the Girondins visualised it)... as an exaggerated form of the old struggle against over-centralisation....

"...The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by that parasitic excrescence, the 'state', feeding upon and hampering the free movement of society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France....

"...The Communal Constitution would have brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the town working men, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local self-government, but no longer as a counterpoise to state power, now become superfluous."

"Breaking state power", which was a "parasitic excrescence"; its "amputation", its "smashing"; "state power, now become superfluous"—these are the expressions Marx used in regard to the state when appraising and analysing the experience of the Commune.

All this was written a little less than half a century ago; and now one has to engage in excavations, as it were, in order to bring undistorted Marxism to the knowledge of the mass of the people. The conclusions drawn from the obser-

vation of the last great revolution which Marx lived through were forgotten just when the time for the next great proletarian revolutions had arrived.

"...The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which expressed themselves in it show that it was a thoroughly flexible political form, while all previous forms of government had been essentially repressive. Its true secret was this: it was essentially a *working-class government*, the result of the struggle of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which the economic emancipation of labour could be accomplished....

"Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion...."

The utopians busied themselves with "discovering" political forms under which the socialist transformation of society was to take place. The anarchists dismissed the question of political forms altogether. The opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of the parliamentary democratic state as the limit which should not be overstepped; they battered their foreheads praying before this "model", and denounced as anarchism every desire to *break* these forms.

Marx deduced from the whole history of socialism and the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from state to non-state) would be the "proletariat organised as the ruling class". Marx, however, did not set out to *discover* the political forms of this future stage. He limited himself to carefully observing French history, to analysing it, and to drawing the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, namely, that matters were moving towards the *destruction* of the bourgeois state machine.

And when the mass revolutionary movement of the pro-

letariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of its failure, in spite of its short life and patent weakness, began to study the forms it had *discovered*.

The Commune is the form "at last discovered" by the proletarian revolution, under which the economic emancipation of labour can take place.

The Commune is the first attempt by a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois state machine; and it is the political form "at last discovered", by which the smashed state machine can and must be *replaced*.

We shall see further on that the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continue the work of the Commune and confirm Marx's brilliant historical analysis.

## CHAPTER V

### The Economic Basis of the Withering Away of the State

#### 2. The Transition from Capitalism to Communism

Marx continued:

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."

Marx bases this conclusion on an analysis of the role played by the proletariat in modern capitalist society, on the data concerning the development of this society, and on the irreconcilability of the antagonistic interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Previously the question was put as follows: to achieve its emancipation, the proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, win political power and establish its revolutionary dictatorship.

Now the question is put somewhat differently: the transition from capitalist society—which is developing towards communism—to communist society is impossible without a “political transition period”, and the state in this period can only be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

What, then, is the relation of this dictatorship to democracy?

We have seen that the *Communist Manifesto* simply places side by side the two concepts: “to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class” and “to win the battle of democracy”. On the basis of all that has been said above, it is possible to determine more precisely how democracy changes in the transition from capitalism to communism.

In capitalist society, providing it develops under the most favourable conditions, we have a more or less complete democracy in the democratic republic. But this democracy is always hemmed in by the narrow limits set by capitalist exploitation, and consequently always remains, in effect, a democracy for the minority, only for the propertied classes, only for the rich. Freedom in capitalist society always remains about the same as it was in the ancient Greek republics: freedom for the slave-owners. Owing to the conditions of capitalist exploitation, the modern wage slaves are so crushed by want and poverty that “they cannot be bothered with democracy”, “cannot be bothered with politics”; in the ordinary, peaceful course of events, the majority of the population is debarred from participation in public and political life.

The correctness of this statement is perhaps most clearly confirmed by Germany, because constitutional legality steadily endured there for a remarkably long time—nearly half a century (1871-1914)—and during this period the Social-Democrats were able to achieve far more than in

other countries in the way of "utilising legality", and organised a larger proportion of the workers into a political party than anywhere else in the world.

What is this largest proportion of politically conscious and active wage slaves that has so far been recorded in capitalist society? One million members of the Social-Democratic Party—out of fifteen million wage-workers! Three million organised in trade unions—out of fifteen million!

Democracy for an insignificant minority, democracy for the rich—that is the democracy of capitalist society. If we look more closely into the machinery of capitalist democracy, we see everywhere, in the "petty"—supposedly petty—details of the suffrage (residential qualification, exclusion of women, etc.), in the technique of the representative institutions, in the actual obstacles to the right of assembly (public buildings are not for "paupers"!), in the purely capitalist organisation of the daily press, etc., etc.—we see restriction after restriction upon democracy. These restrictions, exceptions, exclusions, obstacles for the poor seem slight, especially in the eyes of one who has never known want himself and has never been in close contact with the oppressed classes in their mass life (and nine out of ten, if not ninety-nine out of a hundred, bourgeois publicists and politicians come under this category); but in their sum total these restrictions exclude and squeeze out the poor from politics, from active participation in democracy.

Marx grasped this *essence* of capitalist democracy splendidly when, in analysing the experience of the Commune, he said that the oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class shall represent and repress them in parliament!

But from this capitalist democracy—that is inevitably narrow and stealthily pushes aside the poor, and is therefore hypocritical and false through and through—forward development does not proceed simply, directly and smoothly, towards "greater and greater democracy", as the liberal professors and petty-bourgeois opportunists would have us

believe. No, forward development, i.e., development towards communism, proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat, and cannot do otherwise, for the *resistance* of the capitalist exploiters cannot be *broken* by anyone else or in any other way.

And the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., the organisation of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of suppressing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy. *Simultaneously* with an immense expansion of democracy, which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the money-bags, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must suppress them in order to free humanity from wage slavery, their resistance must be crushed by force; it is clear that there is no freedom and no democracy where there is suppression and where there is violence.

Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that "the proletariat needs the state, not in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist".

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, i.e., exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change democracy undergoes during the *transition* from capitalism to communism.

Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists has been completely crushed, when the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (i.e., when there is no distinction between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), *only* then "the state . . . ceases to exist", and "*it becomes possible to speak of freedom*". Only then will a truly complete democracy become possible and be realised, a democracy without

any exceptions whatever. And only then will democracy begin to *wither away*, owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually *become accustomed* to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims. They will become accustomed to observing them without force, without coercion, without subordination, *without the special apparatus* for coercion called the state.

The expression "the state *withers away*" is very well chosen, for it indicates both the gradual and the spontaneous nature of the process. Only habit can, and undoubtedly will, have such an effect; for we see around us on millions of occasions how readily people become accustomed to observing the necessary rules of social intercourse when there is no exploitation, when there is nothing that arouses indignation, evokes protest and revolt, and creates the need for *suppression*.

And so in capitalist society we have a democracy that is curtailed, wretched, false, a democracy only for the rich, for the minority. The dictatorship of the proletariat, the period of transition to communism, will for the first time create democracy for the people, for the majority, along with the necessary suppression of the exploiters, of the minority. Communism alone is capable of providing really complete democracy, and the more complete it is, the sooner it will become unnecessary and wither away of its own accord.

In other words, under capitalism we have the state in the proper sense of the word, that is, a special machine for the suppression of one class by another, and, what is more, of the majority by the minority. Naturally, to be successful, such an undertaking as the systematic suppression of the exploited majority by the exploiting minority calls for the utmost ferocity and savagery in the matter of suppressing,



it calls for seas of blood, through which mankind is actually wading its way in slavery, serfdom and wage labour.

Furthermore, during the *transition* from capitalism to communism suppression is *still* necessary, but it is now the suppression of the exploiting minority by the exploited majority. A special apparatus, a special machine for suppression, the "state", is *still* necessary, but this is now a transitional state. It is no longer a state in the proper sense of the word; for the suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of the wage slaves of *yesterday* is comparatively so easy, simple and natural a task that it will entail far less bloodshed than the suppression of the risings of slaves, serfs or wage-labourers, and it will cost mankind far less. And it is compatible with the extension of democracy to such an overwhelming majority of the population that the need for a *special machine* of suppression will begin to disappear. Naturally, the exploiters are unable to suppress the people without a highly complex machine for performing this task, but *the people* can suppress the exploiters even with a very simple "machine", almost without a "machine", without a special apparatus, by the simple *organisation of the armed people* (such as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, we would remark, running ahead).

Lastly, only communism makes the state absolutely unnecessary, for there is *nobody* to be suppressed—"nobody" in the sense of a *class*, of a systematic struggle against a definite section of the population. We are not utopians, and do not in the least deny the possibility and inevitability of excesses on the part of *individual persons*, or the need to stop *such* excesses. In the first place, however, no special machine, no special apparatus of suppression, is needed for this; this will be done by the armed people themselves, as simply and as readily as any crowd of civilised people, even in modern society, interferes to put a stop to a scuffle or to prevent a woman from being assaulted. And, secondly, we know that the fundamental social cause of excesses,

which consist in the violation of the rules of social intercourse, is the exploitation of the people, their want and their poverty. With the removal of this chief cause, excesses will inevitably begin to "*wither away*". We do not know how quickly and in what succession, but we do know they will wither away. With their withering away the state will also *wither away*.

Without building utopias, Marx defined more fully what can be defined *now* regarding this future, namely, the difference between the lower and higher phases (levels, stages) of communist society.

### 3. The First Phase of Communist Society

In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx goes into details to disprove Lassalle's idea that under socialism the worker will receive the "undiminished" or "full product of his labour". Marx shows that from the whole of the social labour of society there must be deducted a reserve fund, a fund for the expansion of production, a fund for the replacement of the "wear and tear" of machinery, and so on. Then, from the means of consumption must be deducted a fund for administrative expenses, for schools, hospitals, old people's homes, and so on.

Instead of Lassalle's hazy, obscure, general phrase ("the full product of his labour to the worker"), Marx makes a sober estimate of exactly how socialist society will have to manage its affairs. Marx proceeds to make a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there will be no capitalism, and says:

"What we have to deal with here [in analysing the programme of the workers' party] is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is, therefore, in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped

with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it comes."

It is this communist society, which has just emerged into the light of day out of the womb of capitalism and which is in every respect stamped with the birthmarks of the old society, that Marx terms the "first", or lower phase of communist society.

The means of production are no longer the private property of individuals. The means of production belong to the whole of society. Every member of society, performing a certain part of the socially-necessary work, receives a certificate from society to the effect that he has done a certain amount of work. And with this certificate he receives from the public store of consumer goods a corresponding quantity of products. After a deduction is made of the amount of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given to it.

"Equality" apparently reigns supreme.

But when Lassalle, having in view such a social order (usually called socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of communism), says that this is "equitable distribution", that this is "the equal right of all to an equal product of labour", Lassalle is mistaken and Marx exposes the mistake.

"Hence, the equal right," says Marx, in this case *still* certainly conforms to "bourgeois law", which, like all law, *implies inequality*. All law is an application of an *equal* measure to *different* people who in fact are not alike, are not equal to one another. That is why the "equal right" is a violation of equality and an injustice. In fact, everyone, having performed as much social labour as another, receives an equal share of the social product (after the above-mentioned deductions).

But people are not alike: one is strong, another is weak; one is married, another is not; one has more children, another has less, and so on. And the conclusion Marx draws is:

"...With an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will

in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all those defects, the right instead of being equal would have to be unequal."

The first phase of communism, therefore, cannot yet provide justice and equality: differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still persist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible because it will be impossible to seize the *means of production*—the factories, machines, land, etc.—and make them private property. In smashing Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, vague phrases about "equality" and "justice" *in general*, Marx shows the *course of development* of communist society, which is *compelled* to abolish at first *only* the "injustice" of the means of production seized by individuals, and which is *unable* at once to eliminate the other injustice, which consists in the distribution of consumer goods "according to the amount of labour performed" (and not according to needs).

The vulgar economists, including the bourgeois professors and "our" Tugan, constantly reproach the socialists with forgetting the inequality of people and with "dreaming" of eliminating this inequality. Such a reproach, as we see, only proves the extreme ignorance of the bourgeois ideologists.

Marx not only most scrupulously takes account of the inevitable inequality of men, but he also takes into account the fact that the mere conversion of the means of production into the common property of the whole of society (commonly called "socialism") *does not remove* the defects of distribution and the inequality of "bourgeois law", which *continues to prevail* so long as products are divided "according to the amount of labour performed". Continuing, Marx says:

"But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged, after prolonged birth pangs, from capitalist society. Law can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby."

And so, in the first phase of communist society (usually called socialism) "bourgeois law" is *not* abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic revolution so far attained, i.e., only in respect of the means of production. "Bourgeois law" recognises them as the private property of individuals. Socialism converts them into *common* property. *To that extent*—and to that extent alone—"bourgeois law" disappears.

However, it persists as far as its other part is concerned; it persists in the capacity of regulator (determining factor) in the distribution of products and the allotment of labour among the members of society. The socialist principle, "He who does not work shall not eat", is *already* realised; the other socialist principle, "An equal amount of products for an equal amount of labour", is also *already* realised. But this is not yet communism, and it does not yet abolish "bourgeois law", which gives unequal individuals, in return for unequal (really unequal) amounts of labour, equal amounts of products.

This is a "defect", says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of communism; for if we are not to indulge in utopianism, we must not think that having overthrown capitalism people will at once learn to work for society *without any rules of law*. Besides, the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately create* the economic prerequisites for such a change.

Now, there are no other rules than those of "bourgeois law". To this extent, therefore, there still remains the need for a state, which, while safeguarding the common ownership of the means of production, would safeguard equality in labour and in the distribution of products.

The state withers away insofar as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no *class* can be *suppressed*.

But the state has not yet completely withered away, since there still remains the safeguarding of "bourgeois law",

which sanctifies actual inequality. For the state to wither away completely, complete communism is necessary.

#### 4. The Higher Phase of Communist Society

Marx continues:

"In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and with it also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished, after labour has become not only a livelihood but life's prime want, after the productive forces have increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois law be left behind in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"

Only now can we fully appreciate the correctness of Engels' remarks mercilessly ridiculing the absurdity of combining the words "freedom" and "state". So long as the state exists there is no freedom. When there is freedom, there will be no state.

The economic basis for the complete withering away of the state is such a high stage of development of communism at which the antithesis between mental and physical labour disappears, at which there consequently disappears one of the principal sources of modern *social* inequality—a source, moreover, which cannot on any account be removed immediately by the mere conversion of the means of production into public property, by the mere expropriation of the capitalists.

This expropriation will make it *possible* for the productive forces to develop to a tremendous extent. And when we see how incredibly capitalism is already *retarding* this develop-

ment, when we see how much progress could be achieved on the basis of the level of technique already attained, we are entitled to say with the fullest confidence that the expropriation of the capitalists will inevitably result in an enormous development of the productive forces of human society. But how rapidly this development will proceed, how soon it will reach the point of breaking away from the division of labour, of doing away with the antithesis between mental and physical labour, of transforming labour into "life's prime want"—we do not and *cannot* know.

That is why we are entitled to speak only of the inevitable withering away of the state, emphasising the protracted nature of this process and its dependence upon the rapidity of development of the *higher phase* of communism, and leaving the question of the time required for, or the concrete forms of, the withering away quite open, because there is *no* material for answering these questions.

The state will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", i.e., when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labour has become so productive that they will voluntarily work *according to their ability*. "The narrow horizon of bourgeois law", which compels one to calculate with the heartlessness of a Shylock whether one has not worked half an hour more than somebody else, whether one is not getting less pay than somebody else—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for society, in distributing the products, to regulate the quantity to be received by each; each will take freely "according to his needs".

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare that such a social order is "sheer utopia" and to sneer at the socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control over the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, cars, pianos, etc. Even to this day, most bourgeois "savants" confine themselves to

sneering in this way, thereby betraying both their ignorance and their selfish defence of capitalism.

Ignorance—for it has never entered the head of any socialist to “promise” that the higher phase of the development of communism will arrive; as for the great socialists’ *forecast* that it will arrive, it presupposes not the present productivity of labour and *not the present* ordinary run of people, who, like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky’s stories,\* are capable of damaging the stocks of public wealth “just for fun”, and of demanding the impossible.

Until the “higher” phase of communism arrives, the socialists demand the *strictest* control by society *and by the state* over the measure of labour and the measure of consumption; but this control must *start* with the expropriation of the capitalists, with the establishment of workers’ control over the capitalists, and must be exercised not by a state of bureaucrats, but by a state of *armed workers*.

The selfish defence of capitalism by the bourgeois ideologists (and their hangers-on, like the Tseretelis, Chernovs and Co.) consists in that they *substitute* arguing and talk about the distant future for the vital and burning question of *present-day* politics, namely, the expropriation of the capitalists, the conversion of *all* citizens into workers and other employees of *one* huge “syndicate”—the whole state—and the complete subordination of the entire work of this syndicate to a genuinely democratic state, *the state of the Soviets of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies*.

In fact, when a learned professor, followed by the philistine, followed in turn by the Tseretelis and Chernovs, talks of wild utopias, of the demagogic promises of the Bolsheviks, of the impossibility of “introducing” socialism, it is the higher stage, or phase, of communism he has in mind, which no one has ever promised or even thought to

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\* Seminary students won notoriety by their extreme ignorance and barbaric habits. They were portrayed by N. G. Pomyalovsky in his book *Sketches of Seminary Life*.—Ed.



"introduce", because, generally speaking, it cannot be "introduced".

And this brings us to the question of the scientific distinction between socialism and communism which Engels touched on in his above-quoted argument about the incorrectness of the name "Social-Democrat". Politically, the distinction between the first, or lower, and the higher phase of communism, will in time, probably, be tremendous. But it would be ridiculous to recognise this distinction now, under capitalism, and only individual anarchists, perhaps, could invest it with primary importance (if there still are people among the anarchists who have learned nothing from the "Plekhanov" conversion of the Kropotkins, of Grave, Cornelissen and other "stars" of anarchism into social-chauvinists or into "anarcho-trenchists", as Ghe, one of the few anarchists who have still preserved a sense of honour and a conscience, has put it).

But the scientific distinction between socialism and communism is clear. What is usually called socialism was termed by Marx the "first", or lower, phase of communist society. Insofar as the means of production become *common* property, the word "communism" is also applicable here, providing we do not forget that this is *not* complete communism. The great significance of Marx's explanations is that here, too, he consistently applies materialist dialectics, the theory of development, and regards communism as something which develops *out of* capitalism. Instead of scholastically invented, "concocted" definitions and fruitless disputes over words (What is socialism? What is communism?), Marx gives an analysis of what might be called the stages of the economic maturity of communism.

In its first phase, or first stage, communism *cannot* as yet be fully mature economically and entirely free from traditions or vestiges of capitalism. Hence the interesting phenomenon that communism in its first phase retains "the narrow horizon of *bourgeois law*". Of course, bourgeois law in regard to the distribution of *consumer goods* inevitably

presupposes the existence of the *bourgeois state*, for law is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of rules of law.

It follows that under communism there remains for a time not only bourgeois law, but even the bourgeois state, without the bourgeoisie!

This may sound like a paradox or simply a dialectical conundrum, of which Marxism is often accused by people who have not taken the slightest trouble to study its extraordinarily profound content.

But in fact, remnants of the old, surviving in the new, confront us in life at every step, both in nature and in society. And Marx did not arbitrarily insert a scrap of "bourgeois" law into communism, but indicated what is economically and politically inevitable in a society emerging out of the *womb* of capitalism.

Democracy is of enormous importance to the working class in its struggle against the capitalists for its emancipation. But democracy is by no means a boundary not to be overstepped; it is only one of the stages on the road from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to communism.

Democracy means equality. The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality and of equality as a slogan will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of *classes*. But democracy means only *formal* equality. And as soon as equality is achieved for all members of society *in relation* to ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of advancing farther, from formal equality to actual equality, i.e., to the operation of the rule "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs". By what stages, by means of what practical measures humanity will proceed to this supreme aim we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realise how infinitely mendacious is the ordinary bourgeois conception of socialism as something lifeless, rigid, fixed once and for all, whereas in reality *only* socialism will be

the beginning of a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life.

Democracy is a form of the state, one of its varieties. Consequently, like every state, it represents, on the one hand, the organised, systematic use of force against persons; but, on the other hand, it signifies the formal recognition of equality of citizens, the equal right of all to determine the structure of, and to administer, the state. This, in turn, results in the fact that, at a certain stage in the development of democracy, it first welds together the class that wages a revolutionary struggle against capitalism—the proletariat, and enables it to crush, smash to atoms, wipe off the face of the earth the bourgeois, even the republican-bourgeois, state machine, the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy and to substitute for them a *more* democratic state machine, but a state machine nevertheless, in the shape of armed workers who proceed to form a militia involving the entire population.

Here “quantity turns into quality”: *such* a degree of democracy implies overstepping the boundaries of bourgeois society and beginning its socialist reorganisation. If really *all* take part in the administration of the state, capitalism cannot retain its hold. The development of capitalism, in turn, creates the *preconditions* that *enable* really “all” to take part in the administration of the state. Some of these preconditions are: universal literacy, which has already been achieved in a number of the most advanced capitalist countries, then the “training and disciplining” of millions of workers by the huge, complex, socialised apparatus of the postal service, railways, big factories, large-scale commerce, banking, etc., etc.

Given these *economic* preconditions, it is quite possible, after the overthrow of the capitalists and the bureaucrats, to proceed immediately, overnight, to replace them in the *control* over production and distribution, in the work of

*keeping account* of labour and products, by the armed workers, by the whole of the armed population. (The question of control and accounting should not be confused with the question of the scientifically trained staff of engineers, agronomists and so on. These gentlemen are working today in obedience to the wishes of the capitalists, and will work even better tomorrow in obedience to the wishes of the armed workers.)

Accounting and control—that is *mainly* what is needed for the “smooth working”, for the proper functioning, of the *first phase* of communist society. *All* citizens are transformed into hired employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. *All* citizens become employees and workers of a *single* country-wide state “syndicate”. All that is required is that they should work equally, do their proper share of work, and get equal pay. The accounting and control necessary for this have been *simplified* by capitalism to the utmost and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations—which any literate person can perform—of supervising and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and issuing appropriate receipts.\*.

When the *majority* of the people begin independently and everywhere to keep such accounts and exercise such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general and popular; and there will be no getting away from it, there will be “nowhere to go”.

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory, with equality of labour and pay.

But this “factory” discipline, which the proletariat, after defeating the capitalists, after overthrowing the exploiters,

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\* When the more important functions of the state are reduced to such accounting and control by the workers themselves, it will cease to be a “political state” and “public functions will lose their political character and become mere administrative functions” (cf. above, Chapter IV. 2, Engels’ controversy with the anarchists).

will extend to the whole of society, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is only a necessary *step* for thoroughly cleansing society of all the infamies and abominations of capitalist exploitation, *and for further progress.*

From the moment all members of society, or at least the vast majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*, have taken this work into their own hands, have organised control over the insignificant capitalist minority, over the gentry who wish to preserve their capitalist habits and over the workers who have been thoroughly corrupted by capitalism—from this moment the need for government of any kind begins to disappear altogether. The more complete the democracy, the nearer the moment when it becomes unnecessary. The more democratic the “state” which consists of the armed workers, and which is “no longer a state in the proper sense of the word”, the more rapidly *every form* of state begins to wither away.

For when *all* have learned to administer and actually do independently administer social production, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the parasites, the sons of the wealthy, the swindlers and other “guardians of capitalist traditions”, the escape from this popular accounting and control will inevitably become so incredibly difficult, such a rare exception, and will probably be accompanied by such swift and severe punishment (for the armed workers are practical men and not sentimental intellectuals, and they will scarcely allow anyone to trifle with them), that the *necessity* of observing the simple, fundamental rules of the community will very soon become a *habit*.

Then the door will be thrown wide open for the transition from the first phase of communist society to its higher phase, and with it to the complete withering away of the state.

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pp. 418-37, 464-79

## The Tasks of the Revolution

Russia is a country of the petty bourgeoisie, by far the greater part of the population belonging to this class. Its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are inevitable, and only when it joins the proletariat is the victory of the revolution, of the cause of peace, freedom, and land for the working people assured easily, peacefully, quickly, and smoothly.

The course of our revolution shows us these vacillations in practice. Let us then not harbour any illusions about the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties; let us stick firmly to the path of our proletarian class. The poverty of the poor peasants, the horrors of the war, the horrors of hunger—all these are showing the masses more and more clearly the correctness of the proletarian path, the need to support the proletarian revolution.

The “peaceful” hopes of the petty bourgeoisie that there might be a “coalition” with the bourgeoisie\* and agreements

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\* The petty-bourgeois parties of the Mensheviks and S.R.s hoped that the formation of a coalition government, which was to include, along with representatives of big capital, Mensheviks and S.R.s, would make it possible to meet some demands of the people and prevent the bourgeois-democratic revolution developing into a socialist one. The Menshevik and S.R. members of the coalition government—V. M. Chernov, N. D. Avksentyev, I. G. Tsereteli and others—became tools in the hands of the representatives of big capital who dominated the government and determined its policy.—*Ed.*

with them, that it will be possible to wait "calmly" for the "speedy" convocation of the Constituent Assembly,\* etc., have been mercilessly, cruelly, implacably destroyed by the course of the revolution. The Kornilov revolt was the last cruel lesson, a lesson on a grand scale, supplementing thousands upon thousands of small lessons in which workers and peasants were deceived by local capitalists and land-owners, in which soldiers were deceived by the officers, etc., etc.

Discontent, indignation and wrath are growing in the army, among the peasantry and among the workers. The "coalition" of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with the bourgeoisie, promising everything and fulfilling nothing, is irritating the masses, is opening their eyes, is pushing them towards insurrection.

There is a growing Left opposition among the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Spiridonova and others) and among the Mensheviks (Martov and others), and has already reached forty per cent of the Council and Congress of those parties. And down *below*, among the proletariat and the peasantry, particularly the poorest sections, the *majority* of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks belong to the *Lefts*.

The Kornilov revolt is instructive and has proved a good lesson.

It is impossible to know whether the Soviets will be able to go farther than the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and thus ensure a peaceful development of the revolution, or whether they will continue to mark time, thus making a proletarian uprising inevitable.

We cannot know this.

Our business is to help get everything possible done to make sure the "last" change for a peaceful development of the revolution, to help by the presentation of our programme,

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\* The Provisional Government, which had promised to convene a Constituent Assembly in its declaration in March 1917, actually tried to prevent its convocation by repeatedly postponing the elections.—*Ed.*

by making clear its national character, its absolute accord with the interests and demands of a vast majority of the population.

The following lines are an essay in the presentation of such a programme.

Let us take it more to those down below, to the masses, to the office employees, to the workers, to the peasants, not only to our supporters, but particularly to those who follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, to the non-party elements, to the ignorant. Let us lift them up so that they can pass an independent judgement, make their own decisions, send *their own* delegations to the Conference,\* to the Soviets, to the government and our work will not have been in vain, *no matter what* the outcome of the Conference. This will then prove useful for the Conference, for the elections to the Constituent Assembly, and for all other political activity in general.

Experience teaches us that the Bolshevik programme and tactics are correct. So little time passed, so much happened from April 20 to the Kornilov revolt.

The experience of the *masses*, the experience of *oppressed* classes taught them very, very much in that time; the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks have completely cut adrift from the masses. This will most certainly be revealed in the discussion of our concrete programme insofar as we are able to bring it to the notice of the masses.

#### **Agreements with the Capitalists Are Disastrous**

1. To leave in power the representatives of the bourgeoisie, even a small number of them, to leave in power such notorious Kornilovites as Generals Alexeyev, Klembovsky, Bagration, Gagarin, and others, or such as have proved their complete powerlessness in face of the bourgeoisie, and their ability of acting Bonaparte-fashion like Kerensky, is,

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\* The reference is to the convocation of the so-called Democratic Conference which the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were preparing.—Ed.



on the one hand, merely opening the door wide to famine and the inevitable economic catastrophe which the capitalists are purposely accelerating and intensifying; on the other hand, it will lead to a military catastrophe, since the army hates the General Staff and cannot enthusiastically participate in the imperialist war. Besides, there is no doubt that Kornilovite generals and officers remaining in power will *deliberately open the front to the Germans*, as they have done in Galicia and Riga. This can be prevented only by the formation of a new government on a new basis, as expounded below. To continue any kind of agreements with the bourgeoisie after all that we have gone through since April 20\* would be, on the part of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not only an error but a direct betrayal of the people and of the revolution.

#### Power to the Soviets

2. All power in the country must pass exclusively to the representatives of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on the basis of a definite programme and under the condition of the government being fully responsible to the Soviets. New elections to the Soviets must be held immediately, both to record the experience of the people during the recent weeks of the revolution, which have been particularly eventful, and to eliminate crying injustices (lack of proportional representation, unequal elections, etc.) which in some cases still remain.

All power locally, wherever there are not yet any demo-

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\* On April 20 and 21, 1917, there were mass demonstrations of workers and soldiers in Petrograd held in protest against the Note of the Foreign Minister Milyukov to the Allied Governments. In this Note, dispatched on April 18 (May 1), 1917 Milyukov assured them that the Russian people wanted to continue the imperialist war "to a victorious conclusion". As a result of popular indignation and the following protest demonstrations against the imperialist foreign policy of the Provisional Government, the War Minister Guchkov and Milyukov were compelled to resign.—Ed.

cratically elected institutions, and also in the army, must be taken over exclusively by the local Soviets and by commissars and other institutions elected by them, but only those that have been properly elected.

Workers and revolutionary troops, i.e., those who have in practice shown their ability to suppress the Kornilovites, must everywhere be armed, and this must be done with the full support of the state.

### Peace to the Peoples

3. The Soviet Government must *straight away* offer to *all* the belligerent peoples (i.e., simultaneously both to their governments and to the worker and peasant masses) to conclude an immediate general peace on democratic terms, and also to conclude an immediate armistice (even if only for three months).

The main condition for a democratic peace is the renunciation of annexations (seizures)—not in the incorrect sense that all powers get back what they have lost, but in the only correct sense that *every* nationality without any exception, both in Europe and in the colonies, shall obtain its freedom and the possibility to decide for itself whether it is to form a *separate* state or whether it is to enter into the composition of some other state.

In offering the peace terms, the Soviet Government must itself immediately take steps towards their fulfilment, i.e., it must publish and repudiate the secret treaties by which we have been bound up to the present time, those which were concluded by the tsar and which give Russian capitalists the promise of the pillaging of Turkey, Austria, etc. Then we must immediately satisfy the demands of the Ukrainians and the Finns, ensure them, as well as all other non-Russian nationalities in Russia, full freedom, including freedom of secession, applying the same to *all* Armenia, undertaking to evacuate that country as well as the Turkish lands occupied by us, etc.

Such peace terms will not meet with the approval of the capitalists, but they will meet with such tremendous sympathy on the part of all the peoples and will cause such a great world-wide outburst of enthusiasm and of general indignation against the continuation of the predatory war that it is extremely probable that we shall at once obtain a truce and a consent to open peace negotiations. For the workers' revolution against the war is irresistibly growing everywhere, and it can be spurred on, not by phrases about peace (with which the workers and peasants have been deceived by *all* the imperialist governments including our own Kerensky government), but by a break with the capitalists and by the offer of peace.

If the least probable thing happens, i.e., if not a single belligerent state accepts even a truce, then as far as we are concerned the war becomes truly forced upon us, it becomes a truly just war of defence. If this is understood by the proletariat and the poor peasantry Russia will become many times stronger even in the military sense, especially after a complete break with the capitalists who are robbing the people; furthermore, under such conditions it would, as far as we are concerned, be a war in league with the oppressed classes of all countries, a war in league with the oppressed peoples of the whole world, not in a word, but in deed.

The people must be particularly cautioned against the capitalists' assertion which sometimes influences the petty bourgeoisie and others who are frightened, namely, that the British and other capitalists are capable of doing serious damage to the Russian revolution if we break the present predatory alliance with them. Such an assertion is false through and through, for "Allied financial aid" enriches the bankers and "supports" the Russian workers and peasants in exactly the same way as a rope supports a man who has been hanged. There is plenty of bread, coal, oil and iron in Russia; for these products to be properly distributed it is only necessary for us to rid ourselves of the landowners and

capitalists who are robbing the people. As to the possibility of the Russian people being threatened with war by their present Allies, it is obviously absurd to assume that the French and Italians could unite their armies with those of the Germans and move them against Russia who offers a just peace. As to Britain, America, and Japan, even if they were to declare war against Russia (which for them is extremely difficult, both because of the extreme unpopularity of such a war among the masses and because of the divergence of material interests of the capitalists of those countries over the partitioning of Asia, especially over the plunder of China), they could not cause Russia one-hundredth part of the damage and misery which the war with Germany, Austria, and Turkey is causing her.

#### **Land to Those Who Till It**

4. The Soviet Government must immediately declare the abolition of private landed estates without compensation and place all these estates under the management of the peasant committees pending the solution of the problem by the Constituent Assembly. These peasant committees are also to take over all the landowners' stock and implements, with the proviso that they be placed primarily at the disposal of the poor peasants for their use free of charge.

Such measures, which have long been demanded by an immense majority of the peasantry, both in the resolutions of congresses and in hundreds of mandates from local peasants (as may be seen, for instance, from a summary of 242 mandates published by *Izvestia Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov\**), are absolutely and urgently necessary. There must be no further procrastination like that from which the peasantry suffered so much at the time of the "coalition" government.

Any government that hesitates to introduce these measures

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\* Lenin refers to the 242 mandates from the local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies in which they demanded abolition of the landed estates and the transfer of all land to the people.—Ed.

should be regarded as a government *hostile to the people* that should be overthrown and crushed by an uprising of the workers and peasants. On the other hand, only a government that realises these measures will be a government of all the people.

#### **Struggle Against Famine and Economic Ruin**

5. The Soviet Government must immediately introduce workers' control of production and distribution on a nationwide scale. Experience since May 6 has shown that in the absence of such control all the promises of reforms and attempts to introduce them are powerless, and famine, accompanied by unprecedented catastrophe is becoming a greater menace to the whole country week by week.

It is necessary to nationalise the banks and the insurance business immediately, and also the most important branches of industry (oil, coal, metallurgy, sugar, etc.), and at the same time, to abolish commercial secrets and to establish unrelaxing supervision by the workers and peasants over the negligible minority of capitalists who wax rich on government contracts and evade accounting and just taxation of their profits and property.

Such measures, which do not deprive either the middle peasants, the Cossacks or the small handicraftsmen of a single kopek, are urgently needed for the struggle against famine and are absolutely just because they distribute the burdens of the war equitably. Only after capitalist plunder has been curbed and the deliberate sabotage of production has been stopped will it be possible to work for an improvement in labour productivity, introduce universal labour conscription and the proper exchange of grain for manufactured goods, and return to the Treasury thousands of millions in paper money now being hoarded by the rich.

Without such measures, the abolition of the landed estates without compensation is also impossible, for the major part of the estates is mortgaged to the banks, so that the interests of the landowners and capitalists are inseparably linked up.

The latest resolution of the Economic Department of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (*Rabochaya Gazeta* No. 152) recognises not only the "*harm*" caused by the government's measures (like the raising of grain prices for the enrichment of the landowners and kulaks), not only "the fact of the *complete inactivity* on the part of the central organs set up by the government for the regulation of economic life", but even the "*contravention of the laws*" by this government. This admission on the part of the ruling parties, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, proves once more the criminal nature of the policy of conciliation with the bourgeoisie.

**Struggle Against the Counter-Revolution  
of the Landowners and Capitalists**

6. The Kornilov and Kaledin revolt was supported by the entire class of the landowners and capitalists, with the party of the Cadets ("people's freedom" party) at their head. This has already been fully proved by the facts published in *Izvestia* of the Central Executive Committee.

However, nothing has been done either to suppress this counter-revolution completely or even to investigate it, and nothing serious can be done without the transfer of power to the Soviets. No commission can conduct a full investigation, or arrest the guilty, etc., unless it holds state power. Only a Soviet government can do this, and must do it. Only a Soviet government can make Russia secure against the otherwise inevitable repetition of "Kornilov" attempts by arresting the Kornilovite generals and the ringleaders of the bourgeois counter-revolution (Guchkov, Milyukov, Ryabushinsky, Maklakov and Co.), by disbanding the counter-revolutionary associations (the Duma, the officers' unions, etc.), by placing their members under the surveillance of the local Soviets and by disbanding counter-revolutionary armed units.

This government alone can set up a commission to make a full and public investigation of the Kornilov case and all

the other cases, even those started by the bourgeoisie; and the party of Bolsheviks, in its turn, would appeal to the workers to give full co-operation and to submit only to such a commission.

Only a Soviet government could successfully combat such a flagrant injustice as the capitalists' seizure of the largest printing presses and most of the papers with the aid of millions squeezed out of the people. It is necessary to suppress the bourgeois counter-revolutionary papers (*Rech*, *Russkoye Slovo*, etc.), to confiscate their printing presses, to declare private advertisements in the papers a state monopoly, to transfer them to the paper published by the Soviets, the paper that tells the peasants the truth. Only in this way can and must the bourgeoisie be deprived of its powerful weapon of lying and slandering, deceiving the people with impunity, misleading the peasantry, and preparing a counter-revolution.

#### **Peaceful Development of the Revolution**

7. A possibility very seldom to be met with in the history of revolutions now faces the democracy of Russia, the Soviets and the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik parties—the possibility of convening the Constituent Assembly at the appointed date without further delays, of making the country secure against a military and economic catastrophe, and of ensuring the peaceful development of the revolution.

If the Soviets now take full state power exclusively into their own hands for the purpose of carrying out the programme set forth above, they will not only obtain the support of nine-tenths of the population of Russia, the working class and an overwhelming majority of the peasantry; they will also be assured of the greatest revolutionary enthusiasm on the part of the army and the majority of the people, an enthusiasm without which victory over famine and war is impossible.

There could be no question of any resistance to the Soviets

if the Soviets themselves did not waver. No class will dare start an uprising against the Soviets, and the landowners and capitalists, taught a lesson by the experience of the Kornilov revolt, will give up their power peacefully and yield to the ultimatum of the Soviets. To overcome the capitalists' resistance to the programme of the Soviets, supervision over the exploiters by workers and peasants and such measures of punishing the recalcitrants as confiscation of their entire property coupled with a short term of arrest will be sufficient.

By seizing full power, the Soviets could still today—and this is probably their last chance—ensure the peaceful development of the revolution, peaceful elections of deputies by the people, and a peaceful struggle of parties inside the Soviets; they could test the programmes of the various parties in practice and power could pass peacefully from one party to another.

The entire course of development of the revolution, from the movement of April 20 to the Kornilov revolt, shows that there is bound to be the bitterest civil war between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat if this opportunity is missed. Inevitable catastrophe will bring this war nearer. It must end, as all data and considerations accessible to human reason go to prove, in the full victory of the working class, in that class, supported by the poor peasantry, carrying out the above programme; it may, however, prove very difficult and bloody, and may cost the lives of tens of thousands of landowners, capitalists, and officers who sympathise with them. The proletariat will not hesitate to make every sacrifice to save the revolution, which is possible only by implementing the programme set forth above. On the other hand, the proletariat would support the Soviets in every way if they were to make use of their last chance to secure a peaceful development of the revolution.



## Marxism and Insurrection

*A Letter to the Central Committee of the  
R.S.D.L.P.(B.)*

One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism resorted to by the dominant "socialist" parties is the opportunist lie that preparation for insurrection, and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art, is "Blanquism".

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself unfortunate fame by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one little bit.

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, referring to insurrection specifically as an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that you must *win* the first success and then proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking advantage of his confusion, etc., etc.?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a *revolutionary upsurge of the people*. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that *turning-point* in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations*

in the ranks of the enemy and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*.

Once these conditions exist, however, to refuse to treat insurrection as an *art* is a betrayal of Marxism and a betrayal of the revolution.

To show that it is precisely the present moment that the Party *must* recognise as the one in which the entire course of events has objectively placed *insurrection* on the order of the day and that insurrection must be treated as an art, it will perhaps be best to use the method of comparison, and to draw a parallel between July 3-4\* and the September days.

On July 3-4 it could have been argued, without violating the truth, that the correct thing to do was to take power, for our enemies would in any case have accused us of insurrection and ruthlessly treated us as rebels. However, to have decided on this account in favour of taking power at that time would have been wrong, because the objective conditions for the victory of the insurrection did not exist.

(1) We still lacked the support of the class which is the vanguard of the revolution.

We still did not have a majority among the workers and soldiers of Petrograd and Moscow. Now we have a majority in both Soviets. It was created *solely* by the history of July and August, by the experience of the "ruthless treatment" meted out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov revolt.

(2) There was no country-wide revolutionary upsurge at that time. There is now, after the Kornilov revolt; the situa-

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\* On July 3 and 4, 1917, demonstrations of workers and soldiers several thousands strong were held in Petrograd in protest against the Russian offensive on the German front launched on the order of the Provisional Government. The demonstrations were carried out under the slogan "All power to the Soviets".—Ed.

tion in the provinces and assumption of power by the Soviets in many localities prove this.

(3) At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is headed by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious finish and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a bloc, i.e., a coalition, with the Cadets.

(4) Therefore, an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake; we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically even though Petrograd was at times in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for Petrograd. There was not at the time that "savageness", or fierce hatred *both of* the Kerenskys *and of* the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had still not been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 3-4 because, *before the Kornilov revolt*, the army and the provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd.

Now the picture is entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

We have the following of the *majority* of the people, because Chernov's resignation,\* while by no means the only symptom, is the most striking and obvious symptom that the peasants *will not receive land* from the Socialist-Revolu-

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\* Lenin refers to the withdrawal of V. M. Chernov, a Socialist-Revolutionary leader, from the Provisional Government.—Ed.

tionaries' bloc (or from the Socialist-Revolutionaries themselves). And that is the chief reason for the popular character of the revolution.

We are in the advantageous position of a party that knows for certain which way to go at a time when *imperialism as a whole* and the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary bloc as a whole are vacillating in an incredible fashion.

*Our victory is assured*, for the people are close to desperation, and we are showing the entire people a sure way out; we demonstrated to the entire people during the "Kornilov days" the value of our leadership, and then *proposed* to the politicians of the bloc a compromise, *which they rejected*, although there is no let-up in their vacillations.

It would be a great mistake to think that our offer of a compromise had not *yet* been rejected, and that the Democratic Conference may *still* accept it. The compromise was proposed by *a party to parties*; it could not have been proposed in any other way. It was rejected by *parties*. The Democratic Conference is *a conference*, and nothing more. One thing must not be forgotten, namely, that the *majority* of the revolutionary people, the poor, embittered peasants, are not represented in it. It is a conference of *a minority of the people*—this obvious truth must not be forgotten. It would be a big mistake, sheer parliamentary cretinism on our part, if we were to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament; for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a permanent and sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would nevertheless *decide nothing*. The power of decision lies *outside it* in the working-class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow.

All the objective conditions exist for a successful insurrection. We have the exceptional advantage of a situation in which *only* our victory in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; in which *only* our victory in the insurrection will give the peasants land immediately; a situation in which *only our* victory in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution—

foil it by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace, a peace that will *benefit* the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a victorious insurrection, save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become "defencists", we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the *war party par excellence*, and we shall conduct the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away *all* the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts and dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and footwear to the front.

And then we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense; the chances are a hundred to one that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

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Having recognised the absolute necessity for an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow in order to save the revolution and to save Russia from a "separate" partition by the imperialists of both groups, we must first adapt our political tactics at the Conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection; secondly, we must show that it is not only in words that we accept Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art.

At the Conference we must immediately cement the Bolshevik group, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the waverers' camp. They are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

We must draw up a brief declaration from the Bolsheviks, emphasising in no uncertain manner the irrelevance of long speeches and of "speeches" in general, the necessity for immediate action to save the revolution, the absolute neces-

sity for a complete break with the bourgeoisie, for the removal of the present government, in its entirety, for a complete rupture with the Anglo-French imperialists, who are preparing a "separate" partition of Russia, and for the immediate transfer of all power to *revolutionary democrats, headed by the revolutionary proletariat*.

Our declaration must give the briefest and most trenchant formulation of *this* conclusion in connection with the programme proposals of peace for the peoples, land for the peasants, confiscation of scandalous profits, and a check on the scandalous sabotage of production by the capitalists.

The briefer and more trenchant the declaration, the better. Only two other highly important points must be clearly indicated in it, namely, that the people are worn out by the vacillations, that they are fed up with the irresolution of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks; and that we are definitely breaking with these *parties* because they have betrayed the revolution.

And another thing. By immediately proposing a peace without annexations, by immediately breaking with the Allied imperialists and with all imperialists, either we shall at once obtain an armistice, or the entire revolutionary proletariat will rally to the defence of the country, and a really just, really revolutionary war will then be waged by revolutionary democrats under the leadership of the proletariat.

Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *dispatch* our entire group to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there, the pulse of life is there, there is the source of salvation for our revolution, and there is the motive force of the Democratic Conference.

There, in ardent and impassioned speeches, we must explain our programme and put the alternative: either the Conference adopts it *in its entirety*, or else insurrection. There is no middle course. Delay is impossible. The revolution is dying.

By putting the question in this way, by concentrating our entire group in the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to determine the right moment to start the insurrection.*

In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *headquarters* of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre,\* occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress,\*\* arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move *our* insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution *unless insurrection is treated as an art.*

Written September 13-14  
(26-27), 1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 26,  
pp. 22-27

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\* The Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petrograd was the place where the Democratic Conference was convened.—*Ed.*

\*\* The Peter and Paul Fortress on the Neva opposite the Winter Palace had a large arsenal and was strategically situated.—*Ed.*

## ***From Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?***

The chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment on a country-wide scale of the most precise and most conscientious accounting and control, of *workers' control* of the production and distribution of goods.

When the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* argued that in advancing the slogan "workers' control" we were slipping into syndicalism, this argument was an example of the stupid school-boy method of applying "Marxism" without studying it, just *learning it by rote* in the Struve manner. Syndicalism either repudiates the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, or else relegates it, as it does political power in general, to a back seat. We, however, put it in the forefront. If we simply say in unison with the *Novaya Zhizn* writers: *not workers' control but state control*, it is simply a bourgeois-reformist phrase, it is, in essence, a purely Cadet formula, because the Cadets have no objection to the workers *participating* in "state" control. The Kornilovite Cadets know perfectly well that such participation offers the bourgeoisie the best way of fooling the workers, the most subtle way of politically *bribing* all the Gvozdyovs, Nikitins, Prokopoviches, Tseretelis and the rest of that gang.

When we say: "workers' control", always *juxtaposing* this slogan to dictatorship of the proletariat, always putting it *immediately after* the latter, we thereby explain what kind of state we mean. The state is the organ of *class* domination. Of which class? If of the bourgeoisie, then it is the Cadet-



Kornilov-“Kerensky” state which has been “Kornilovising” and “Kerenskyising” the working people of Russia for more than six months. If it is of the proletariat, if we are speaking of a proletarian state, *that is*, of the proletarian dictatorship, then workers’ control *can* become the country-wide, all-embracing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods.

This is the chief difficulty, the chief task that faces the proletariat, i.e., socialist, revolution. Without the Soviets, this task would be impracticable, at least in Russia. The Soviets *indicate* to the proletariat the organisational work which *can* solve this historically important problem.

This brings us to another aspect of the question of the state apparatus. In addition to the chiefly “oppressive” apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy—the modern state possesses an apparatus which has extremely close connections with the banks and syndicates, an apparatus which performs an enormous amount of accounting and registration work, if it may be expressed this way. This apparatus must not, and should not, be smashed. It must be wrested from the control of the capitalists; the capitalists and the wires they pull must be *cut off, lopped off, chopped away from* this apparatus; it must be *subordinated* to the proletarian Soviets; it must be expanded, made more comprehensive, and nation-wide. And this *can* be done by utilising the achievements already made by large-scale capitalism (in the same way as the proletarian revolution can, in general, reach its goal only by utilising these achievements).

Capitalism has created an accounting *apparatus* in the shape of the banks, syndicates, postal service, consumers’ societies, and office employees’ unions. *Without big banks socialism would be impossible.*

The big banks *are* the “state apparatus” which we *need* to bring about socialism, and which we *take ready-made* from capitalism; our task here is merely to *lop off* what *capitalistically mutilates* this excellent apparatus, to make

it *even bigger*, even more democratic, even more comprehensive. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank, the biggest of the big, with branches in every rural district, in every factory, will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the *socialist* apparatus. This will be country-wide *book-keeping*, country-wide *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods, this will be, so to speak, something in the nature of the *skeleton* of socialist society.

We can "lay hold of" and "set in motion" this "state apparatus" (which is not fully a state apparatus under capitalism, but which will be so with us, under socialism) at one stroke, by a single decree, because the actual work of book-keeping, control, registering, accounting and counting is performed by *employees*, the majority of whom themselves lead a proletarian or semi-proletarian existence.

By a single decree of the proletarian government these employees can and must be transferred to the status of state employees, in the same way as the watchdogs of capitalism like Briand and other bourgeois ministers, by a single decree, transfer railwaymen on strike to the status of state employees. We shall need many more state employees of this kind, and more *can* be obtained, because capitalism has simplified the work of accounting and control, has reduced it to a comparatively simple system of *book-keeping*, which any literate person can do.

The conversion of the bank, syndicate, commercial, etc., etc., rank-and-file employees into state employees is quite feasible both technically (thanks to the preliminary work performed for us by capitalism, including finance capitalism) and politically, provided the *Soviets* exercise control and supervision.

As for the higher officials, of whom there are very few, but who gravitate towards the capitalists, they will have to be dealt with in the same way as the capitalists, i.e., "severely". Like the capitalists, they will offer *resistance*. This resistance will have to be *broken*, and if the immortal-naïve Peshekhonov, as early as June 1917, lisped like the

infant that he was in state affairs, that "the resistance of the capitalists has been broken", this childish phrase, this childish boast, this childish swagger, *will be converted by the proletariat into reality.*

We can do this, for it is merely a question of breaking the resistance of an insignificant minority of the population, literally a handful of people, over each of whom the employees' unions, the trade unions, the consumers' societies and the Soviets will institute such *supervision* that every Tit Titych\* will be *surrounded* as the French were at Sedan.\*\* We know these Tit Tityches by name: we only have to consult the lists of directors, board members, large shareholders, etc. There are several hundred, at most several thousand of them in the *whole* of Russia, and the proletarian state, with the apparatus of the Soviets, of the employees' unions, etc., will be able to appoint ten or even a hundred supervisors to each of them, so that instead of "breaking resistance" it may even be possible, by means of *workers' control* (over the capitalists), to make all resistance *impossible*.

The important thing will not be even the confiscation of the capitalists' property, but country-wide, all-embracing workers' control over the capitalists and their possible supporters. Confiscation alone leads nowhere, as it does not contain the element of organisation, of accounting for proper distribution. Instead of confiscation, we could easily impose a *fair tax* (on the Shingaryov scale, for instance), taking care, of course, to preclude the possibility of anyone evading assessment, concealing the truth, evading the law. And this possibility can be *eliminated only* by the workers' control of the *workers' state*.

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\* *Tit Titych*—a rich merchant from A. N. Ostrovsky's play *Shouldering Another's Trouble*. Lenin used this name as a synonym of capitalist tycoons.—Ed.

\*\* *Sedan*—town in France near which the French army was surrounded and routed by the Prussians in September 1870, during the Franco-Prussian war.—Ed.

*Compulsory syndication*, i.e., compulsory amalgamation in associations under state control—this is what capitalism has prepared the way for, this is what has been carried out in Germany by the Junkers’\* state, this is what can be easily carried out in Russia by the Soviets, by the proletarian dictatorship, and this is what will *provide us with a state apparatus* that will be universal, up-to-date, and non-bureaucratic.\*\*

\* \* \*

The fourth plea of the counsels for the bourgeoisie is that the proletariat will not be able “to set the state apparatus in motion”. There is nothing new in this plea compared with the preceding one. We could not, of course, either lay hold of or set in motion the old apparatus. The new apparatus, the Soviets, *has already* been set in motion by “a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves”. We only have to free it from the *shackles* put on it by the domination of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders. This apparatus *is already* in motion; we only have to free it from the monstrous, petty-bourgeois impediments preventing it from going full speed ahead.

Two circumstances must be considered here to supplement what has already been said. In the first place, the new means of control have been created *not* by us, but by capitalism in its military-imperialist stage; and in the second place, it is important to introduce more democracy into the *administration* of a proletarian state.

The grain monopoly and bread rationing were introduced not by us, but by the capitalist state in war-time. It had already introduced universal labour conscription within the

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\* *Junkers*—Prussian nobles, owners of large landed estates of a semi-feudal type.—Ed.

\*\* For further details of the meaning of compulsory syndication see my pamphlet: *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*. (See *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 342-45.—Ed.)

framework of capitalism, which is war-time penal servitude for the workers. But here too, as in all its history-making activities, the proletariat takes its weapons from capitalism and does not "invent" or "create them out of nothing".

The grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription in the hand of the proletarian state, in the hands of sovereign Soviets, will be the most powerful means of accounting and control, means which, applied to the capitalists, and to *the rich in general*, applied to them by the *workers*, will provide a force unprecedented in history for "setting the state apparatus in motion", for overcoming the resistance of the capitalists, for subordinating them to the proletarian state. These means of control and of *compelling people to work* will be more potent than the laws of the Convention and its guillotine. The guillotine *only* terrorised, only broke *active* resistance. *For us, this is not enough.*

For us, this is not enough. We must not only "terrorise" the capitalists, i.e., make them feel the omnipotence of the proletarian state and give up all idea of actively resisting it. We must also break *passive* resistance, which is undoubtedly more dangerous and harmful. We must not only break resistance of every kind. We must also *compel the capitalists to work* within the framework of the new state organisation. It is not enough to "remove" the capitalists; we must (after removing the undesirable and incorrigible "resisters") employ them *in the service of the new state*. This applies both to the capitalists and to the upper section of the bourgeois intellectuals, office employees, etc.

And we have the means to do this. The means and instruments for this have been placed in our hands by the capitalist state in the war. These means are the grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the fundamental, the first and most important rule the Soviets of Workers' Deputies can and will introduce when they become the ruling power.

Every worker has a work-book. This book does not degrade him, although *at present* it is undoubtedly a document of

capitalist wage-slavery, certifying that the workman belongs to some parasite.

The Soviets will introduce work-books *for the rich* and *then* gradually for the whole population (in a peasant country work-books will probably not be needed for a long time for the overwhelming majority of the peasants). The work-book will cease to be the badge of the "common herd", a document of the "lower" orders, a certificate of wage-slavery. It will become a document certifying that in the new society there are no longer any "workmen", nor, on the other hand, are there any longer men *who do not work*.

The rich will be obliged to get a work-book from the workers' or office employees' union with which their occupation is most closely connected, and every week, or other definite fixed period, they will have to get from that union a certificate to the effect that they are performing their work conscientiously; without this they will not be able to receive bread ration cards or provisions in general. The proletarian state will say: we need good organisers of banking and the amalgamation of enterprises (in this matter the capitalists have more experience, and it is easier to work with experienced people), and we need far, far more engineers, agronomists, technicians and scientifically trained specialists of every kind than were needed before. We shall give all these specialists work to which they are accustomed and which they can cope with; in all probability we shall introduce complete wage equality only gradually and shall pay these specialists higher salaries during the transition period. We shall place them, however, under comprehensive workers' control and we shall achieve the complete and absolute operation of the rule "He who does not work, neither shall he eat". We shall not invent the organisational form of the work, but take it ready-made from capitalism—we shall take over the banks, syndicates, the best factories, experimental stations, academies, and so forth; all that we shall have to do is to borrow the best models furnished by the advanced countries.

Of course, we shall not in the least descend to a utopia, we are not deserting the soil of most sober, practical reason when we say that the entire capitalist class will offer the most stubborn resistance, but this resistance will be broken by the organisation of the entire population in Soviets. Those capitalists who are exceptionally stubborn and recalcitrant will, of course, have to be punished by the confiscation of their whole property and by imprisonment. On the other hand, however, the victory of the proletariat will bring about *an increase* in the number of cases of the kind that I read about in today's *Izvestia* for example:

"On September 26, two engineers came to the Central Council of Factory Committees to report that a group of engineers had decided to form a union of socialist engineers. The Union believes that the present time is actually the beginning of the social revolution and places itself at the disposal of the working people, desiring, in defence of the workers' interests, to work in complete unity with the workers' organisations. The representatives of the Central Council of Factory Committees answered that the Council will gladly set up in its organisation an Engineers' Section which will embody in its programme the main theses of the First Conference of Factory Committees on workers' control over production. A joint meeting of delegates of the Central Council of Factory Committees and of the initiative group of socialist engineers will be held within the next few days." (*Izvestia*, September 27, 1917.)

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The proletariat, we are told, will not be able to set the state apparatus in motion.

Since the 1905 revolution, Russia has been governed by 130,000 landowners, who have perpetrated endless violence against 150,000,000 people, heaped unconstrained abuse upon them, and condemned the vast majority to inhuman toil and semi-starvation.

Yet we are told that the 240,000 members of the Bolshevik Party will not be able to govern Russia, govern her in the interests of the poor and against the rich. These 240,000 are already backed by no less than a million votes of the adult population, for this is precisely the proportion between the

number of Party members and the number of votes cast for the Party that has been established by the experience of Europe and the experience of Russia as shown, for example, by the elections to the Petrograd City Council last August. We therefore already have a "state apparatus" of *one million* people devoted to the socialist state for the sake of high ideals and not for the sake of a fat sum received on the 20th of every month.

In addition to that we have a "magic way" to enlarge our state apparatus *tenfold* at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is to draw the working people, to draw the poor, into the daily work of state administration.

To explain how easy it will be to employ this magic way and how faultlessly it will operate, let us take the simplest and most striking example possible.

The state is to forcibly evict a certain family from a flat and move another in. This often happens in the capitalist state, and it will also happen in our proletarian or socialist state.

The capitalist state evicts a working-class family which has lost its breadwinner and cannot pay the rent. The bailiff appears with police, or militia, a whole squad of them. To effect an eviction in a working-class district a whole detachment of Cossacks is required. Why? Because the bailiff and the militiaman refuse to go without a very strong military guard. They know that the scene of an eviction arouses such fury among the neighbours, among thousands and thousands of people who have been driven to the verge of desperation, arouses such hatred towards the capitalists and the capitalist state, that the bailiff and the squad of militiamen run the risk of being torn to pieces at any minute. Large military forces are required, several regiments must be brought into a big city, and the troops must come from some distant, outlying region so that the soldiers will not be familiar with the life of the urban poor, so that the soldiers will not be "infected" with socialism.



The proletarian state has to forcibly move a very poor family into a rich man's flat. Let us suppose that our squad of workers' militia is fifteen strong; two sailors, two soldiers, two class-conscious workers (of whom, let us suppose, only one is a member of our Party, or a sympathiser), one intellectual, and eight from the poor working people, of whom at least five must be women, domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and so forth. The squad arrives at the rich man's flat, inspects it and finds that it consists of five rooms occupied by two men and two women—"You must squeeze up a bit into two rooms this winter, citizens, and prepare two rooms for two families now living in cellars. Until the time, with the aid of engineers (you are an engineer, aren't you?), we have built good dwellings for everybody, you will have to squeeze up a little. Your telephone will serve ten families. This will save a hundred hours of work wasted on shopping, and so forth. Now in your family there are two unemployed persons who can perform light work: a citizeness fifty-five years of age and a citizen fourteen years of age. They will be on duty for three hours a day supervising the proper distribution of provisions for ten families and keeping the necessary account of this. The student citizen in our squad will now write out this state order in two copies and you will be kind enough to give us a signed declaration that you will faithfully carry it out."

This, in my opinion, can illustrate how the distinction between the old bourgeois and the new socialist state apparatus and state administration could be illustrated.

We are not utopians. We know that an unskilled labourer or a cook cannot immediately get on with the job of state administration. In this we agree with the Cadets, with Breshkovskaya, and with Tsereteli. We differ, however, from these citizens in that we demand an immediate break with the prejudiced view that only the rich, or officials chosen from rich families, are capable of *administering* the state, of performing the ordinary, everyday work of administration. We demand that *training* in the work of

state administration be conducted by class-conscious workers and soldiers and that this training be begun at once, i.e., that a *beginning* be made at once in training all the working people, all the poor, for this work.

We know that the Cadets are also willing to teach the people democracy. Cadet ladies are willing to deliver lectures to domestic servants on equal rights for women in accordance with the best English and French sources. And also, at the very next concert-meeting, before an audience of thousands, an exchange of kisses will be arranged on the platform: the Cadet lady lecturer will kiss Breshkovskaya, Breshkovskaya will kiss ex-Minister Tsereteli, and the grateful people will therefore receive an object-lesson in republican equality, liberty and fraternity. . . .

Yes, we agree that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya and Tsereteli are in their own way devoted to democracy and are propagating it among the people. But what is to be done if our conception of democracy is somewhat different from theirs?

In our opinion, to ease the incredible burdens and miseries of the war and also to heal the terrible wounds the war has inflicted on the people, *revolutionary* democracy is needed, *revolutionary* measures of the kind described in the example of the distribution of housing accommodation in the interests of the poor. *Exactly the same* procedure must be adopted in both town and country for the distribution of provisions, clothing, footwear, etc., in respect of the land in the rural districts, and so forth. For the administration of the state in *this* spirit we can *at once set in motion a state* apparatus consisting of ten if not twenty million people, an apparatus such as no capitalist state has ever known. We alone can create such an apparatus, for we are sure of the fullest and devoted sympathy of the vast majority of the population. We alone can create such an apparatus, because we have class-conscious workers disciplined by long capitalist "schooling" (it was not for nothing that we went to learn in the school of capitalism), workers who are *capable* of

forming a workers' militia and of *gradually* expanding it (beginning to expand it at once) into a militia *embracing the whole people*. The class-conscious workers must lead, but for work of administration they can enlist the vast mass of the working and oppressed people.

It goes without saying that this new apparatus is bound to make mistakes in taking its first steps. But did not the peasants make mistakes when they emerged from serfdom and began to manage their own affairs? Is there any way other than practice by which the people can learn to govern themselves and to avoid mistakes? Is there any way other than by proceeding immediately to genuine self-government by the people? The chief thing now is to abandon the prejudiced bourgeois-intellectualist view that only special officials, who by their very social position are entirely dependent upon capital, can administer the state. The chief thing is to put an end to the state of affairs in which bourgeois officials and "socialist" ministers are trying to govern in the old way, but are incapable of doing so and, after seven months, are faced with a peasant revolt in a peasant country! The chief thing is to imbue the oppressed and the working people with confidence in their own strength, to prove to them in practice that they can and must themselves ensure the *proper*, most strictly regulated and organised distribution of bread, all kinds of food, milk, clothing, housing, etc., *in the interests of the poor*. Unless this is done, Russia *cannot* be saved from collapse and ruin. The conscientious, bold, universal move to hand over administrative work to proletarians and semi-proletarians, will, however, rouse such unprecedented revolutionary enthusiasm among the people, will so multiply the people's forces in combating distress, that much that seemed impossible to our narrow, old, bureaucratic forces will become possible for the millions, who will *begin to work for themselves* and not for the capitalists, the gentry, the bureaucrats, and not out of fear of punishment.

Pertinent to the question of the state apparatus is also the question of centralism raised with unusual vehemence and ineptitude by Comrade Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn* No. 138, of September 27, in an article entitled: "The Bolsheviks and the Problem of Power".

Comrade Bazarov reasons as follows: "The Soviets are not an apparatus suitable for all spheres of state life", for, he says, seven months' experience has shown, and "scores and hundreds of documents in the possession of the Economic Department of the St. Petersburg Executive Committee" have confirmed, that the Soviets, although actually enjoying "full power" in many places, "have not been able to achieve anything like satisfactory results in combating economic ruin". What is needed is an apparatus "divided up according to branches of production, with strict centralisation within each branch, and subordinated to one, country-wide centre". "It is a matter", if you please, "not of replacing the old apparatus, but merely of reforming it... no matter how much the Bolsheviks may jeer at people with a plan..."

All these arguments of Comrade Bazarov's are positively amazing for their helplessness, they echo the arguments of the bourgeoisie and reflect their class point of view.

In fact, to say that the Soviets have anywhere in Russia ever enjoyed "full power" is simply ridiculous (if it is not a repetition of the selfish class lie of the capitalists). Full power means power over all the land, over all the banks, over all the factories; a man who is at all familiar with the facts of history and science on the connection between politics and economics could not have "forgotten" this "trifling" circumstance.

The bourgeoisie's device is to *withhold* power from the Soviets, *sabotage* every important step they take, while at the same time retaining government in their own hands, retaining power over the land, the banks, etc., and then throwing the blame for the ruin upon the Soviets! This is

exactly what the whole sad experience of the coalition amounts to.

The Soviets have never had full power, and the measures they have taken could not result in anything but palliatives that added to the confusion.

The effort to prove the necessity for centralism to the Bolsheviks who are centralists by conviction, by their programme and by the entire tactics of their Party, is really like forcing an open door. The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are wasting their time only because they have totally failed to understand the meaning and significance of our jeers at their "country-wide" point of view. And the *Novaya Zhizn* people have failed to understand this because they merely pay *lip-service* to the doctrine of the class struggle, but do not accept it seriously. Repeating the words about the class struggle they have learned by rote, they are constantly slipping into the "above-class point of view", amusing in theory and reactionary in practice, and are calling this fawning upon the bourgeoisie a "country-wide" plan.

The state, dear people, is a class concept. The state is an organ or instrument of violence exercised by one class against another. So long as it is an instrument of violence exercised by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, the proletariat can have only one slogan: *destruction* of this state. But when the state will be a proletarian state, when it will be an instrument of violence exercised by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, we shall be fully and unreservedly in favour of a strong state power and of centralism.

To put it in more popular language, we do not jeer at "plans", but at Bazarov and Co.'s failure to understand that by repudiating "workers' control", by repudiating the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they *are for* the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. There is no middle course; a middle course is the futile dream of the petty-bourgeois democrat.

Not a single central body, not a single Bolshevik has ever argued against *centralisation* of the Soviets, against

their amalgamation. None of us objects to having factory committees in each branch of production, or to their centralisation. Bazarov is *wide of the mark*.

We laugh, have laughed, and will laugh not at "centralism" and not at "plans", but at *reformism*, because, after the experience of the coalition, your reformism is utterly ridiculous. And to say "not replace the apparatus but reform it" means to be a reformist, means to become not a revolutionary but a reformist democrat. Reformism means nothing more than concessions on the part of the ruling class, but *not* its overthrow; it makes concessions, but power remains in *its hands*.

This is precisely what has been tried during six months of the coalition.

This is what we laugh at. Having failed to obtain a thorough grasp of the doctrine of the class struggle, Bazarov allows himself to be caught by the bourgeoisie who sing in chorus "Just so, just so, we are by no means opposed to reform, we are in favour of the workers participating in country-wide control, we fully agree with that", and good Bazarov *objectively* sings the descant for the capitalists.

This has always been and always will be the case with people who in the thick of intense class struggle want to take up a "middle" position. And it is because the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are incapable of understanding the class struggle that their policy is such a ridiculous and eternal oscillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Get busy on "plans", dear citizens, that is not politics, that is not the class struggle; here you may be of use to the people. You have many economists on your paper. Unite with those engineers and others who are willing to work on problems of regulating production and distribution; devote the centre page of your big "apparatus" (your paper) to a practical study of precise facts on the production and distribution of goods in Russia, on banks, syndicates, etc., etc.—that is how you will be of use to the people; that is how your sitting between two stools will not be particularly

harmful; such work on "plans" will earn not the ridicule, but the gratitude of the workers.

When the proletariat is victorious it will do the following, it will set economists, engineers, agronomists, and so forth, to work *under the control* of the workers' organisations on drawing up a "plan", on verifying it, on devising labour-saving methods of centralisation, on devising the simplest, cheapest, most convenient and universal measures and methods of control. For this we shall pay the economists, statisticians and technicians good money . . . but we shall not give them anything to eat if they do not perform this work conscientiously and entirely *in the interests of the working people*.

We are in favour of centralism and of a "plan", but of the centralism and plan of the *proletarian* state, of proletarian regulation of production and distribution in the interests of the poor, the working people, the exploited, *against* the exploiters. We can agree to only one meaning of the term "country-wide", namely, that which breaks the resistance of the capitalists, which gives all power to the majority of the people, i.e., the proletarians and semi-proletarians, the workers and the poor peasants.

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The fifth plea is that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power because "the situation is exceptionally complicated"....

O wise men! They, perhaps, would be willing to reconcile themselves to revolution if only the "situation" were not "exceptionally complicated".

Such revolutions never occur, and sighs for such a revolution amount to nothing more than the reactionary wails of a bourgeois intellectual. Even if a revolution has started in a situation that seemed to be not very complicated, the development of the revolution itself *always* creates an

*exceptionally* complicated situation. A revolution, a real, profound, a "people's" revolution, to use Marx's expression, is the incredibly complicated and painful process of the death of the old and birth of the new social order, of the mode of life of tens of millions of people. Revolution is a most intense, furious, desperate class struggle and civil war. Not a single great revolution in history has taken place without civil war. And only a "man in a muffler" can think that civil war is conceivable without an "exceptionally complicated situation".

If the situation were not exceptionally complicated there would be no revolution. If you are afraid of wolves don't go into the forest.

There is nothing to discuss in the fifth plea, because there is no economic, political, or any other meaning whatever in it. It contains only the yearning of people who are distressed and frightened by the revolution. To characterise this yearning I shall take the liberty of mentioning two little things from my personal experience.

I had a conversation with a wealthy engineer shortly before the July days. This engineer had once been a revolutionary, had been in the Social-Democratic movement and even a member of the Bolshevik Party. Now he was full of fear and rage at the turbulent and indomitable workers. "If they were at least like the German workers," he said (he is an educated man and has been abroad), "of course, I understand that the social revolution is, in general, inevitable, but here, when the workers' level has been so reduced by the war... it is not a revolution, it is an abyss."

He was willing to accept the social revolution if history were to lead to it in the peaceful, calm, smooth and precise manner of a German express train pulling into a station. A sedate conductor would open the carriage door and announce: "Social Revolution Station! *Alle aussteigen!* (All change!)" In that case he would have no objection to changing his position of engineer under the Tit Tityches to that of engineer under the workers' organisations.



That man has seen strikes. He knows what a storm of passion the most ordinary strike arouses even in the most peaceful times. He, of course, understands how many million times more furious this storm must be when the class struggle has aroused *all* the working people of a vast country, when war and exploitation have driven almost to desperation millions of people who for centuries have been tormented by the landowners, for decades have been robbed and downtrodden by the capitalists and the tsar's officials. He understands all this "theoretically", he only pays *lip service* to this, he is simply terrified by the "exceptionally complicated situation".

After the July days, thanks to the extremely solicitous attention with which the Kerensky government honoured me, I was obliged to go underground. Of course, it was the workers who sheltered people like us. In a small working-class house in a remote working-class suburb of Petrograd, dinner is being served. The hostess puts bread on the table. The host says: "Look what fine bread. 'They' dare not give us bad bread now. And we had almost given up even thinking that we'd ever get good bread in Petrograd again."

I was amazed at this class appraisal of the July days. My thoughts had been revolving around the political significance of those events, weighing the role they played in the general course of events, analysing the situation that caused this zigzag in history and the situation it would create, and how we ought to change our slogans and alter our Party apparatus to adapt it to the changed situation. As for bread, I, who had not known want, did not give it a thought. I took bread for granted, as a by-product of the writer's work, as it were. The mind approaches the foundation of everything, the class struggle for bread, through political analysis that follows an extremely complicated and devious path.

This member of the oppressed class, however, even though one of the well-paid and quite intelligent workers, takes the bull by the horns with that astonishing simplicity and straightforwardness, with that firm determination and amazing clarity of outlook from which we intellectuals are as remote as

the stars in the sky. The whole world is divided into two camps: "us", the working people, and "them", the exploiters. Not a shadow of embarrassment over what had taken place; it was just one of the battles in the long struggle between labour and capital. When you fell trees, chips fly.

"What a painful thing is this 'exceptionally complicated situation' created by the revolution," that's how the bourgeois intellectual thinks and feels.

"We squeezed 'them' a bit; 'they' won't dare to lord it over us as they did before. We'll squeeze again—and chuck them out altogether," that's how the worker thinks and feels.

Written at the end of  
September-October 1  
(14), 1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 26,  
pp. 104-20

## Letter to Central Committee Members\*

Comrades,

I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.

With all my might I urge comrades to realise that everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Soviets), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed people.

The bourgeois onslaught of the Kornilovites and the removal of Verkhovsky\*\* show that we must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having first disarmed the officer cadets (defeating them, if they resist), and so on.

We must not wait! We may lose everything!

The value of the immediate seizure of power will be the defence of the *people* (not of the congress, but of the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) from the Kornil-

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\* This letter was written by Lenin on the evening of October 24 (November 6), 1917. Later that night Lenin arrived at the Smolny Palace from where he directed the armed uprising.—*Ed.*

\*\* A. I. Verkhovsky, Minister of War in the last Provisional Government, resigned on October 19 (November 1), 1917 over the rejection of his proposal for demobilising a considerable part of the army.—*Ed.*

lovite government, which has driven out Verkhovsky and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.

Who must take power?

That is not important at present. Let the Revolutionary Military Committee do it, or "some other institution" which will declare that it will relinquish power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people, the interests of the army (the immediate proposal of peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken immediately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.

All districts, all regiments, all forces must be mobilised at once and must immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.

History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.

If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Soviets but on their behalf.

The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure.

It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of October 25. The people have the right and are in duty bound to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and are in duty bound to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.

This is proved by the history of all revolutions; and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the chance slip, knowing that the *salvation of the revolution*, the offer of peace, the salvation of Petro-

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grad, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants depend upon them.

The government is tottering. It must be *given the death-blow* at all costs.

To delay action is fatal.

Written on October 24  
(November 6), 1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 26,  
pp. 234-35

**Report on Peace**  
**Delivered at the Second All-Russia Congress**  
**of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers'**  
**Deputies**  
**October 26 (November 8), 1917**

The question of peace is a burning question, the painful question of the day. Much has been said and written on the subject, and all of you, no doubt, have discussed it quite a lot. Permit me, therefore, to proceed to read a declaration which the government you elect should publish.

**Decree on Peace**

The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, calls upon all the belligerent peoples and their governments to start immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace.

By a just or democratic peace, for which the overwhelming majority of the working class and other working people of all the belligerent countries, exhausted, tormented and racked by the war, are craving—a peace that has been most definitely and insistently demanded by the Russian workers and peasants ever since the overthrow of the tsarist monarchy—by such a peace the government means an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without the seizure of foreign lands, without the forcible incorporation of foreign nations) and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes that this kind of peace be immediately concluded by all the belligerent nations,

and expresses its readiness to take all the resolute measures now, without the least delay, pending the final ratification of all the terms of such a peace by authoritative assemblies of the people's representatives of all countries and all nations.

In accordance with the sense of justice of democrats in general, and of the working classes in particular, the government conceives the annexation or seizure of foreign lands to mean every incorporation of a small or weak nation into a large or powerful state without the precisely, clearly and voluntarily expressed consent and wish of that nation, irrespective of the time when such forcible incorporation took place, irrespective also of the degree of development or backwardness of the nation forcibly annexed to the given state, or forcibly retained within its borders, and irrespective, finally, of whether this nation is in Europe or in distant, overseas countries.

If any nation whatsoever is forcibly retained within the borders of a given state, if, in spite of its expressed desire—no matter whether expressed in the press, at public meetings, in the decisions of parties, or in protests and uprisings against national oppression—it is not accorded the right to decide the forms of its state existence by a free vote, taken after the complete evacuation of the troops of the incorporating or, generally, of the stronger nation and without the least pressure being brought to bear, such incorporation is annexation, i.e., seizure and violence.

The government considers it the greatest of crimes against humanity to continue this war over the issue of how to divide among the strong and rich nations the weak nationalities they have conquered, and solemnly announces its determination immediately to sign terms of peace to stop this war on the terms indicated, which are equally just for all nationalities without exception.

At the same time the government declares that it does not regard the above-mentioned peace terms as an ultimatum; in other words, it is prepared to consider any other peace

terms, and insists only that they be advanced by any of the belligerent countries as speedily as possible, and that in the peace proposals there should be absolute clarity and the complete absence of all ambiguity and secrecy.

The government abolishes secret diplomacy, and, for its part, announces its firm intention to conduct all negotiations quite openly in full view of the whole people. It will proceed immediately with the full publication of the secret treaties endorsed or concluded by the government of landowners and capitalists from February to October 25, 1917. The government proclaims the unconditional and immediate annulment of everything contained in these secret treaties insofar as it is aimed, as is mostly the case, at securing advantages and privileges for the Russian landowners and capitalists and at the retention, or extension, of the annexations made by the Great Russians.

Proposing to the governments and peoples of all countries immediately to begin open negotiations for peace, the government, for its part, expresses its readiness to conduct these negotiations in writing, by telegraph, and by negotiations between representatives of the various countries, or at a conference of such representatives. In order to facilitate such negotiations, the government is appointing its plenipotentiary representative to neutral countries.

The government proposes an immediate armistice to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, and, for its part, considers it desirable that this armistice should be concluded for a period of not less than three months, i.e., a period long enough to permit the completion of negotiations for peace with the participation of the representatives of all peoples or nations, without exception, involved in or compelled to take part in the war, and the summoning of authoritative assemblies of the representatives of the peoples of all countries for the final ratification of the peace terms.

While addressing this proposal for peace to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Pro-



visional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia appeals in particular also to the class-conscious workers of the three most advanced nations of mankind and the largest states participating in the present war, namely, Great Britain, France and Germany. The workers of these countries have made the greatest contributions to the cause of progress and socialism; they have furnished the great examples of the Chartist movement in England, a number of revolutions of historic importance effected by the French proletariat, and, finally, the heroic struggle against the Anti-Socialist Law in Germany and the prolonged, persistent and disciplined work of creating mass proletarian organisations in Germany, a work which serves as a model to the workers of the whole world. All these examples of proletarian heroism and historical creative work are a pledge that the workers of the countries mentioned will understand the duty that now faces them of saving mankind from the horrors of war and its consequences, that these workers, by comprehensive, determined, and supremely vigorous action, will help us to conclude peace successfully, and at the same time emancipate the labouring and exploited masses of our population from all forms of slavery and all forms of exploitation.

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The workers' and peasants' government, created by the Revolution of October 24-25 and basing itself on the support of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, must start immediate negotiations for peace. Our appeal must be addressed both to the governments and to the peoples. We cannot ignore the governments, for that would delay the possibility of concluding peace, and the people's government dare not do that; but we have no right not to appeal to the peoples at the same time. Everywhere there are differences between the governments and the peoples, and we must therefore help the peoples to intervene in questions of war and peace. We will, of course, insist upon the whole of our programme for a peace without annexations and

indemnities. We shall not retreat from it; but we must not give our enemies an opportunity to say that their conditions are different from ours and that therefore it is useless to start negotiations with us. No, we must deprive them of that advantageous position and not present our terms in the form of an ultimatum. Therefore the point is included that we are willing to consider any peace terms and all proposals. We shall consider them, but that does not necessarily mean that we shall accept them. We shall submit them for consideration to the Constituent Assembly which will have the power to decide what concessions can and what cannot be made. We are combating the deception practised by governments which pay lip-service to peace and justice, but in fact wage annexationist and predatory wars. No government will say all it thinks. We, however, are opposed to secret diplomacy and will act openly in full view of the whole people. We do not close our eyes to difficulties and never have done. War cannot be ended by refusal, it cannot be ended by one side. We are proposing an armistice for three months, but shall not reject a shorter period, so that the exhausted army may breathe freely, even if only for a little while; moreover, in all the civilised countries national assemblies must be summoned for the discussion of the terms.

In proposing an immediate armistice, we appeal to the class-conscious workers of the countries that have done so much for the development of the proletarian movement. We appeal to the workers of Britain, where there was the Chartist movement, to the workers of France, who have in repeated uprisings displayed the strength of their class-consciousness, and to the workers of Germany, who waged the fight against the Anti-Socialist Law and have created powerful organisations.

In the Manifesto of March 14,\* we called for the overthrow of the bankers, but, far from overthrowing our own bankers,

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\* Lenin refers to the manifesto issued by the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies "To the Peoples of the World", published on March 15, 1917.—*Ed.*

we entered into an alliance with them. Now we have overthrown the government of the bankers.

The governments and the bourgeoisie will make every effort to unite their forces and drown the workers' and peasants' revolution in blood. But the three years of war have been a good lesson to the masses—the Soviet movement in other countries and the mutiny in the German navy, which was crushed by the officer cadets of Wilhelm the hang-man\*. Finally, we must remember that we are not living in the depths of Africa, but in Europe, where news can spread quickly.

The workers' movement will triumph and will pave the way to peace and socialism. (*Prolonged applause.*)

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pp. 249-53

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\* The reference is to the revolutionary action by German sailors in August 1917. The government of Wilhelm II subjected the rebels to severe reprisals. The leaders of the movement were shot and many other participants were sentenced to hard labour.—*Ed.*

**Concluding Speech Following the Discussion  
on the Report on Peace  
Delivered at the Second Congress of Soviets  
of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies  
October 26 (November 8), 1917**

I shall not touch on the general character of the declaration. The government which your Congress sets up may amend unessential points.

I shall vigorously oppose lending our demand for peace the form of an ultimatum. An ultimatum may prove fatal to our whole cause. We cannot demand that, since some insignificant departure from our demands on the part of the imperialist governments would give them the opportunity of saying that it was impossible to enter into negotiations for peace because of our irreconcilability.

We shall send out our appeal everywhere, it will be made known to everybody. It will be impossible to conceal the terms proposed by our workers' and peasants' government.

It will be impossible to hush up our workers' and peasants' revolution, which has overthrown the government of bankers and landowners.

The governments may not reply to an ultimatum; they will have to reply to the text as we formulate it. Let everyone know what his government has in mind. We do not want any secrets. We want a government to be always under the supervision of the public opinion of its country.

What will the peasant of some remote province say if, owing to our insistence on ultimatums, he will not know what another government wants? He will say: Comrades, why did you rule out the possibility of any peace terms being proposed? I would have discussed them, I would have

examined them, and would then have instructed my representatives in the Constituent Assembly how to act. I am prepared to fight by revolutionary methods for just terms if the governments do not agree, but there might be such terms for some countries that I would be prepared to recommend their governments to go on fighting by themselves. The full realisation of our ideas depends solely on the overthrow of the entire capitalist system. This is what the peasant might say to us, and he would accuse us of being excessively uncompromising over trifles, when for us the main thing is to expose all the vileness, all the baseness of the bourgeoisie and of its crowned and uncrowned hangmen at the head of the government.

We should not and must not give the governments an opportunity of taking refuge behind our uncompromising attitude and of concealing from the peoples the reason why they are being sent to the shambles. This is a tiny drop, but we should not and must not reject this drop, which will wear away the stone of bourgeois conquest. An ultimatum would make the position of our opponents easier. But we shall make all the terms known to the people. We shall confront all the governments with our terms, and let them give an answer to their people. We shall submit all peace proposals to the Constituent Assembly for decision.

There is still another point, comrades, to which you must pay the most careful attention. The secret treaties must be published. The clauses dealing with annexations and indemnities must be annulled. There are various clauses, comrades—the predatory governments, you know, not only made agreements between themselves on plunder, but among them they also included economic agreements and various other clauses on good-neighbourly relations.

We shall not bind ourselves by treaties. We shall not allow ourselves to be entangled by treaties. We reject all clauses on plunder and violence, but we shall welcome all clauses containing provisions for good-neighbourly relations and all economic agreements; we cannot reject these. We propose

an armistice for three months; we choose a lengthy period because the peoples are exhausted, the peoples long for a respite from this bloody shambles that has lasted over three years. We must realise that the peoples should be given an opportunity to discuss the peace terms and to express their will with parliament participating, and this takes time. We demand a lengthy armistice, so that the soldiers in the trenches may enjoy a respite from this nightmare of constant slaughter; but we shall not reject proposals for a shorter armistice; we shall examine them, and it is incumbent upon us to accept them, even if we are offered an armistice of a month or a month and a half. Nor must our proposal for an armistice have the form of an ultimatum, for we shall not give our enemies an opportunity of concealing the whole truth from the peoples, using our irreconcilability as a pretext. It must not be in the form of an ultimatum, for a government is criminal that does not desire an armistice. If we do not put our proposal for an armistice in the form of an ultimatum, we shall thereby show the peoples that the governments are criminal, and the peoples will not stand on ceremony with such criminals. The objection is raised that by not resorting to an ultimatum we are displaying weakness, but it is time to cast aside all bourgeois cant when speaking of the strength of the people. According to the bourgeois conception, there is strength when the people go blindly to the slaughter in obedience to the imperialist governments. The bourgeoisie admit a state to be strong only when it can, by the power of the government apparatus, hurl the people wherever the bourgeois rulers want them hurled. Our idea of strength is different. Our idea is that a state is strong when the people are politically conscious. It is strong when the people know everything, can form an opinion of everything and do everything consciously. We need not fear to tell the truth about fatigue, for what state today is not tired, what nation does not talk about it openly? Take Italy, where, owing to this tiredness, there was a prolonged revolutionary movement demanding the termination of the slaughter. Are

there not mass demonstrations of workers in Germany that put forward a demand for the termination of the war? Was it not fatigue that provoked the mutiny in the German navy that was so ruthlessly suppressed by that hangman, Wilhelm, and his hirelings? If such things are possible in so disciplined a country as Germany, where they are beginning to talk about fatigue and about putting an end to the war, we need not fear to say the same openly, because it is the truth, equally true both of our country and of all the belligerent and even non-belligerent countries.

*Pravda* No. 171,  
November 10 (October 28),  
1917

*Collected Works*, Vol. 26,  
pp. 254-56

**Report on Land**  
**Delivered at the Second Congress of Soviets**  
**of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies**  
**October 26 (November 8), 1917**

We maintain that the revolution has proved and demonstrated how important it is that the land question should be put clearly. The outbreak of the armed uprising, the second, October, Revolution, clearly proves that the land must be turned over to the peasants. The government that has been overthrown and the compromising parties of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries committed a crime when they kept postponing the settlement of the land question on various pretexts and thereby brought the country to economic chaos and a peasant revolt. Their talk about riots and anarchy in the countryside sounds false, cowardly, and deceitful. Where and when have riots and anarchy been provoked by wise measures? If the government had acted wisely, and if their measures had met the needs of the poor peasants, would there have been unrest among the peasant masses? But all the measures of the government, approved by the Avksentyev and Dan Soviets, went counter to the interests of the peasants and compelled them to revolt.

Having provoked the revolt, the government raised a hue and cry about riots and anarchy, for which they themselves were responsible. They were going to crush it by blood and iron, but were themselves swept away by the armed uprising of the revolutionary soldiers, sailors and workers. The first duty of the government of the workers' and peasants' revolution must be to settle the land question, which can pacify



and satisfy the vast masses of poor peasants. I shall read to you the clauses of a decree your Soviet Government must issue. In one of the clauses of this decree is embodied the Mandate to the Land Committees, compiled on the basis of 242 mandates from local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

### Decree on Land

(1) Landed proprietorship is abolished forthwith without any compensation.

(2) The landed estates, as also all crown, monastery, and church lands, with all their livestock, implements, buildings and everything pertaining thereto, shall be placed at the disposal of the volost land committees and the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly.

(3) All damage to confiscated property, which henceforth belongs to the whole people, is proclaimed a grave crime to be punished by the revolutionary courts. The uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures to assure the observance of the strictest order during the confiscation of the landed estates, to determine the size of estates, and the particular estates subject to confiscation, to draw up exact inventories of all property confiscated and to protect in the strictest revolutionary way all agricultural enterprises transferred to the people, with all buildings, implements, livestock, stocks of produce, etc.

(4) The following peasant Mandate, compiled by the newspaper *Izvestia Userossiiskogo Soveta Krestyanskikh Deputatov* from 242 local peasant mandates and published in No. 88 of that paper (Petrograd, No. 88, August 19, 1917), shall serve everywhere to guide the implementation of the great land reforms until a final decision on the latter is taken by the Constituent Assembly.

### Peasant Mandate on the Land

"The land question in its full scope can be settled only by the popular Constituent Assembly.

"The most equitable settlement of the land question is to be as follows:

"(1) *Private ownership of land shall be abolished for ever; land shall not be sold, purchased, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated.*

"*All land, whether state, crown, monastery, church, factory, entailed, private, public, peasant, etc., shall be confiscated without compensation and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the use of all those who cultivate it.*

"Persons who suffer by this property revolution shall be deemed to be entitled to public support only for the period necessary for adaptation to the new conditions of life.

"(2) All mineral wealth—ore, oil, coal, salt, etc., and also all forests and waters of state importance, shall pass into the exclusive use of the state. All the small streams, lakes, woods, etc., shall pass into the use of the communes, to be administered by the local self-government bodies.

"(3) Lands on which *high-level scientific farming is practised—orchards, plantations, seed plots, nurseries, hothouses, etc.—shall not be divided up, but shall be converted into model farms*, to be turned over for exclusive use to the state or to the communes, depending on the size and importance of such lands.

"Household land in towns and villages, with orchards and vegetable gardens, shall be reserved for the use of their present owners, the size of the holdings, and the size of tax levied for the use thereof, to be determined by law.

"(4) Stud farms, government and private pedigree stock and poultry farms, etc., shall be confiscated and become the property of the whole people, and pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on the size and importance of such farms.

"The question of compensation shall be examined by the Constituent Assembly.

"(5) All livestock and farm implements of the confiscated estates shall pass into the exclusive use of the state or a commune, depending on their size and importance, and no compensation shall be paid for this.

"The farm implements of peasants with little land shall not be subject to confiscation.

"(6) The right to use the land shall be accorded to all citizens of the Russian state (without distinction of sex) desiring to cultivate it by their own labour, with the help of their families, or in partnership, but only as long as they are able to cultivate it. The employment of hired labour is not permitted.

"In the event of the temporary physical disability of any member of a village commune for a period of up to two years, the village commune shall be obliged to assist him for this period by collectively cultivating his land until he is again able to work.

"Peasants who, owing to old age or ill-health, are permanently disabled and unable to cultivate the land personally, shall lose their right to the use of it but, in return, shall receive a pension from the state.

"(7) Land tenure shall be on an equality basis, i.e., the land shall be distributed among the working people in conformity with a labour standard or a subsistence standard, depending on local conditions.

"There shall be absolutely no restriction on the forms of land tenure—household, farm, communal, or co-operative, as shall be decided in each individual village and settlement.

"(8) All land, when alienated, shall become part of the national land fund. Its distribution among the peasants shall be in charge of the local and central self-government bodies, from democratically organised village and city communes, in which there are no distinctions of social rank, to central regional government bodies.

"The land fund shall be subject to periodical redistribution, depending on the growth of population and the increase in the productivity and the scientific level of farming.

"When the boundaries of allotments are altered, the original nucleus of the allotment shall be left intact.

"The land of the members who leave the commune shall revert to the land fund; preferential right to such land shall be given to the near relatives of the members who have left, or to persons designated by the latter.

"The cost of fertilisers and improvements put into the land, to the extent that they have not been fully used up at the time the allotment is returned to the land fund, shall be compensated.

"Should the available land fund in a particular district prove inadequate for the needs of the local population, the surplus population shall be settled elsewhere.

"The state shall take upon itself the organisation of resettlement and shall bear the cost thereof, as well as the cost of supplying implements, etc.

"Resettlement shall be effected in the following order: landless peasants desiring to resettle, then members of the commune who are of vicious habits, deserters and so on, and, finally, by lot or by agreement."

The entire contents of this Mandate, as expressing the absolute will of the vast majority of the class-conscious peasants of all Russia, is proclaimed a provisional law,

which, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, shall be carried into effect as far as possible immediately, and as to certain of its provisions with due gradualness, as shall be determined by the uyezds Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

(5) The land of ordinary peasants and ordinary Cossacks shall not be confiscated.

Voices are being raised here that the decree itself and the Mandate were drawn up by the Socialist-Revolutionaries. What of it? Does it matter who drew them up? As a democratic government, we cannot ignore the decision of the masses of the people, even though we may disagree with it. In the fire of experience, applying the decree in practice, and carrying it out locally, the peasants will themselves realise where the truth lies. And even if the peasants continue to follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries, even if they give this party a majority in the Constituent Assembly, we shall still say—what of it? Experience is the best teacher and it will show who is right. Let the peasants solve this problem from one end and we shall solve it from the other. Experience will oblige us to draw together in the general stream of revolutionary creative work, in the elaboration of new state forms. We must be guided by experience; we must allow complete freedom to the creative faculties of the masses. The old government, which was overthrown by armed uprising, wanted to settle the land problem with the help of the old, unchanged tsarist bureaucracy. But instead of solving the problem, the bureaucracy only fought the peasants. The peasants have learned something during the eight months of our revolution; they want to settle all land problems themselves. We are therefore opposed to all amendments to this draft law. We want no details in it, for we are writing a decree, not a programme of action. Russia is vast, and local conditions vary. We trust that the peasants themselves

will be able to solve the problem correctly, properly, better than we could do it. Whether they do it in our spirit or in the spirit of the Socialist-Revolutionary programme is not the point. The point is that the peasants should be firmly assured that there are no more landowners in the countryside, that they themselves must decide all questions, and that they themselves must arrange their own lives. (*Loud applause.*)

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## How to Organise Competition?

Bourgeois authors have been using up reams of paper praising competition, private enterprise, and all the other magnificent virtues and blessings of the capitalists and the capitalist system. Socialists have been accused of refusing to understand the importance of these virtues, and of ignoring "human nature". As a matter of fact, however, capitalism long ago replaced small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to any *considerable* extent, by large- and very large-scale factory production, joint-stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies. Under *such* capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the *mass* of the population, of its overwhelming majority, of ninety-nine out of every hundred toilers; it also means that competition is replaced by financial fraud, nepotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.

Far from extinguishing competition, socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

Now that a socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition.

The hangers-on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described socialism as a uniform, routine, monotonous and drab barrack system. The lackeys of the money-bags, the lick-spittles of the exploiters, the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen used socialism as a bogey to "frighten" the people, who, under capitalism, were doomed to the penal servitude and the barrack-like discipline of arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of dire poverty and semi-starvation. The first step towards the emancipation of the people from this penal servitude is the confiscation of the landed estates, the introduction of workers' control and the nationalisation of the banks. The next steps will be the nationalisation of the factories, the compulsory organisation of the whole population in consumers' societies, which are at the same time societies for the sale of products, and the state monopoly of the trade in grain and other necessities.

Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative. Every factory from which the capitalist has been ejected, or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers' control, every village from which the landowning exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated has only now become a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back a little, rise to his full height, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of forced labour for the exploiter, it has become possible to *work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technology and culture in one's work.

Of course, this greatest change in human history from working under compulsion to working for oneself cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts and violence against the inveterate parasites and their hangers-on. No worker has any illusions on that score. The workers and poor peasants, hardened by dire want and by many long years

of slave labour for the exploiters, by their countless insults and acts of violence, realise that it will take time to *break* the resistance of those exploiters. The workers and peasants are not in the least infected with the sentimental illusions of the intellectual gentlemen, of the *Novaya Zhizn* crowd and other slush, who "shouted" themselves hoarse "denouncing" the capitalists and "gesticulated" against them, only to burst into tears and to behave like whipped puppies when it came to *deeds*, to putting threats into action, to carrying out in practice the work of *removing* the capitalists.

The great change from working under compulsion to working for oneself, to labour planned and organised on a gigantic, national (and to a certain extent international, world) scale, also requires—in addition to "*military*" measures for the suppression of the exploiters' resistance—tremendous *organisational*, organising effort on the part of the proletariat and the poor peasants. The organisational task is interwoven to form a single whole with the task of ruthlessly suppressing by military methods yesterday's slave-owners (capitalists) and their packs of lackeys—the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen. Yesterday's slave-owners and their "intellectual" stooges say and think, "We have always been organisers and chiefs. We have commanded, and we want to continue doing so. We shall refuse to obey the 'common people', the workers and peasants. We shall not submit to them. We shall convert knowledge into a weapon for the defence of the privileges of the money-bags and of the rule of capital over the people."

That is what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals say, think, and do. From the point of view of *self-interest* their behaviour is comprehensible. The hangers-on and spongers on the feudal landowners, the priests, the scribes, the bureaucrats as Gogol depicted them, and the "intellectuals" who hated Belinsky, also found it "hard" to part with serfdom. But the cause of the exploiters and of their "intellectual" menials is hopeless. The workers and peasants are beginning to break down their resistance—unfortunately, not



yet firmly, resolutely and ruthlessly enough—and *break it down they will*.

"They" think that the "common people", the "common" workers and poor peasants, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world-historical sense of the word, organisational tasks which the socialist revolution has imposed upon the working people. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves: "You cannot do without us." But their insolent assumption has no truth in it; educated men are already making their appearance on the side of the people, on the side of the working people, and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital. There are a great many talented organisers among the peasants and the working class, and they are only just beginning to become aware of themselves, to awaken, to stretch out towards great, vital, creative work, to tackle with their own forces the task of building socialist society.

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important, is to develop this independent initiative of the workers, and of all the working and exploited people generally, develop it as widely as possible in creative *organisational* work. At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called "upper classes", only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, are capable of administering the state and directing the organisational development of socialist society.

This is a prejudice fostered by rotten routine, by petrified views, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists, in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering. The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge. The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not and cannot exist among the proletariat. But every *rank-and-file* worker and peasant

who can read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, is capable of *organisational* work. Among the "common people", of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such haughtiness and contempt, there are *many* such men and women. This sort of talent among the working class and the peasants is a rich and still untapped source.

The workers and peasants are still "timid", they have not yet become accustomed to the idea that *they* are now the *ruling* class; they are not yet resolute enough. The revolution could not *at one stroke* instil these qualities into millions and millions of people who all their lives had been compelled by want and hunger to work under the threat of the stick. But the Revolution of October 1917 is strong, viable and invincible because it *awakens* these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, removes the worn-out shackles, and leads the working people on to the road of the *independent* creation of a new life.

Accounting and control—this is the *main* economic task of every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, of every consumers' society, of every union or committee of supplies, of every factory committee or organ of workers' control in general.

We must fight against the old habit of regarding the measure of labour and the means of production from the point of view of the slave whose sole aim is to lighten the burden of labour or to obtain at least some little bit *from the bourgeoisie*. The advanced, class-conscious workers have already started this fight, and they are offering determined resistance to the newcomers who flocked to the factory world in particularly large numbers during the war and who now would like to treat the *people's* factory, the factory that has come into the possession of the people, in the old way, with the sole aim of "snatching the biggest possible piece of the pie and clearing out". All the class-conscious, honest and thinking peasants and working people will take their place in this fight by the side of the advanced workers.

Accounting and control, *if* carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, of *this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of the distribution of products—is the *essence* of socialist transformation, once the political rule of the proletariat has been established and secured.

The accounting and control essential for the transition to socialism can be exercised only by the people. Only the voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the *mass* of the workers and peasants in accounting and controlling *the rich, the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies*, a co-operation marked by revolutionary enthusiasm, can conquer these survivals of accursed capitalist society, these dregs of humanity, these hopelessly decayed and atrophied limbs, this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that socialism has inherited from capitalism.

Workers and peasants, working and exploited people! The land, the banks and the factories have now become the property of the entire people! You *yourselves* must set to work to take account of and control the production and distribution of products—this, and this *alone* is the road to the victory of socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploitation, over all poverty and want! For there is enough bread, iron, timber, wool, cotton and flax in Russia to satisfy the needs of everyone, if only labour and its products are properly distributed, if only a *business-like, practical* control over this distribution by the entire people is established, provided only we can defeat the enemies of the people: the rich and their hangers-on, and the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies, *not only* in politics, but also in *everyday economic* life.

No mercy for these enemies of the people, the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the working people! War to the death against the rich and their hangers-on, the bourgeois intellectuals; war on the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies!

All of them are of the same brood—the spawn of capitalism, the offspring of aristocratic and bourgeois society; the society in which a handful of men robbed and insulted the people; the society in which poverty and want forced thousands and thousands on to the path of rowdyism, corruption and roguery, and caused them to lose all human semblance; the society which inevitably cultivated in the working man the desire to escape exploitation even by means of deception, to wriggle out of it, to escape, if only for a moment, from loathsome labour, to procure at least a crust of bread by any possible means, at any cost, so as not to starve, so as to subdue the pangs of hunger suffered by himself and by his near ones.

The rich and the rogues are two sides of the same coin, they are the two principal categories of *parasites* which capitalism fostered; they are the principal enemies of socialism. These enemies must be placed under the special surveillance of the entire people; they must be ruthlessly punished for the slightest violation of the laws and regulations of socialist society. Any display of weakness, hesitation or sentimentality in this respect would be an immense crime against socialism.

In order to render these parasites harmless to socialist society we must organise the accounting and control of the amount of work done and of production and distribution by the entire people, by millions and millions of workers and peasants, participating voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm. And in order to organise this accounting and control, which is *fully within the ability* of every honest, intelligent and efficient worker and peasant, we must rouse their organising talent, the talent that is to be found in their midst; we must rouse among them—and organise on a national scale—*competition* in the sphere of organisational achievement; the workers and peasants must be brought to see clearly the difference between the necessary advice of an educated man and the necessary control by the “common” worker and peasant of the *slovenliness* that is so usual among the “educated”.

This slovenliness, this carelessness, untidiness, unpunctuality, nervous haste, the inclination to substitute discussion for action, talk for work, the inclination to undertake everything under the sun without finishing anything, are characteristics of the "educated"; and this is not due to the fact that they are bad by nature, still less is it due to their evil will; it is due to all their habits of life, the conditions of their work, to fatigue, to the abnormal separation of mental from manual labour, and so on, and so forth.

Among the mistakes, shortcomings and defects of our revolution a by no means unimportant place is occupied by the mistakes, etc., which are due to these deplorable—but at present inevitable—characteristics of the intellectuals in our midst, and to the *lack* of sufficient supervision by the *workers* over the *organisational* work of the intellectuals.

The workers and peasants are still "timid"; they must get rid of this timidity, and they *certainly* will get rid of it. We cannot dispense with the advice, the instruction of educated people, of intellectuals and specialists. Every sensible worker and peasant understands this perfectly well, and the intellectuals in our midst cannot complain of a lack of attention and comradely respect on the part of the workers and peasants. Advice and instruction, however, is one thing, and the organisation of *practical* accounting and control is another. Very often the intellectuals give excellent advice and instruction, but they prove to be ridiculously, *absurdly*, shamefully "unhandy" and incapable of *carrying out* this advice and instruction, of exercising *practical control* over the translation of words into deeds.

In this very respect it is utterly impossible to dispense with the help and the *leading role* of the practical organisers from among the "people", from among the factory workers and working peasants. "It is not the gods who make pots"—this is the truth that the workers and peasants should get well drilled into their minds. They must understand that the whole thing now is *practical work*; that the historical moment

has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice; when the words of Marx, "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes", become particularly true—every step in really curbing in practice, restricting, fully registering the rich and the rogues and keeping them under control is worth more than a dozen excellent arguments about socialism. For, "theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life".

Competition must be arranged between practical organisers from among the workers and peasants. Every attempt to establish stereotyped forms and to impose uniformity from above, as intellectuals are so inclined to do, must be combated. Stereotyped forms and uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and socialist centralism. The unity of essentials, of fundamentals, of the substance, is not disturbed but ensured by *variety* in details, in specific local features, in methods of *approach*, in *methods* of exercising control, in *ways* of exterminating and rendering harmless the parasites (the rich and the rogues, slovenly and hysterical intellectuals, etc., etc.).

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following the same road. But they are still "timid"; they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, creative task of building the socialist system. The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative. All "communes"—factories, villages, consumers' societies, and committees of supplies—must *compete* with each other as practical organisers of accounting and control of labour and distribution of products. The programme of this accounting and control is simple, clear and intelligible to all—everyone to have bread; everyone to have sound footwear and good clothing; everyone to have warm dwellings; everyone to work conscientiously; not a single rogue (including those who shirk their

work) to be allowed to be at liberty, but kept in prison, or serve his sentence of compulsory labour of the hardest kind; not a single rich man who violates the laws and regulations of socialism to be allowed to escape the fate of the rogue, which should, in justice, be the fate of the rich man. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the *practical* commandment of socialism. This is how things should be organised *practically*. These are the *practical* successes our "communes" and our worker and peasant organisers should be proud of. And this applies particularly to the organisers among the intellectuals (*particularly*, because they are *too much, far too much* in the habit of being proud of their general instructions and resolutions).

Thousands of practical forms and methods of accounting and controlling the rich, the rogues and the idlers must be devised and put to a practical test by the communes themselves, by small units in town and country. Variety is a guarantee of effectiveness here, a pledge of success in achieving the single common aim—to *clean* the land of Russia of all vermin, of fleas—the rogues, of bugs—the rich, and so on and so forth. In one place half a score of rich, a dozen rogues, half a dozen workers who shirk their work (in the manner of rowdies, the manner in which many compositors in Petrograd, particularly in the Party printing-shops, shirk their work) will be put in prison. In another place they will be put to cleaning latrines. In a third place they will be provided with "yellow tickets" after they have served their time, so that everyone shall keep an eye on them, as *harmful* persons, until they reform. In a fourth place, one out of every ten idlers will be shot on the spot. In a fifth place mixed methods may be adopted, and by probational release, for example, the rich, the bourgeois intellectuals, the rogues and rowdies who are corrigible will be given an opportunity to reform quickly. The more variety there will be, the better and richer will be our general experience, the more certain and rapid will be the success of socialism, and the easier will it be for practice to devise—for

only practice can devise—the *best* methods and means of struggle.

In what commune, in what district of a large town, in what factory and in what village are there *no* starving people, *no* unemployed, *no* idle rich, *no* despicable lackeys of the bourgeoisie, saboteurs, who call themselves intellectuals? Where has most been done to raise the productivity of labour, to build good new houses for the poor, to put the poor in the houses of the rich, to regularly provide a bottle of milk for every child of every poor family? It is on these points that *competition* should develop between the communes, communities, producer-consumers' societies and associations, and Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the work in which *talented organisers* should come to the fore *in practice* and be promoted to work in state administration. There is a great deal of talent among the people. It is merely suppressed. It must be given an opportunity to display itself. It *and it alone*, with the support of the people, can save Russia and save the cause of socialism.

Written December  
24-27, 1917  
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## **Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People\***

The Constituent Assembly resolves:

- I. 1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.  
2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.
- II. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves:
  1. Private ownership of land is hereby abolished. All land together with all buildings, farm implements and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the entire working people.
  2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council are hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

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\* "Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People" was approved by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies held in January 1918. Subsequently it formed the basis of the Soviet Constitution.—*Ed.*

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.

4. For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.

5. To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III. 1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same end in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland, commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia, and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first

blow struck at international banking, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

- IV. Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were not yet in a position to rise *en masse* against the exploiters, had not yet experienced the full strength of resistance of the latter in defence of their class privileges, and had not yet applied themselves in practice to the task of building socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even formally, to put itself in opposition to Soviet power.

In essence the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own task is confined to establishing the fundamental principles of the socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

## ***From the Draft Programme of the R.C.P.(B.)\****

### **The Basic Tasks of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Russia**

In Russia today the basic tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat are to carry through to the end, to complete, the expropriation of the landowners and bourgeoisie that has already begun, and the transfer of all factories, railways, banks, the merchant fleet and other means of production and exchange to ownership by the Soviet Republic;

to employ the alliance of urban workers and poor peasants, which has already led to the abolition of private ownership of land, and the law on the transitional form between small-peasant farming and socialism, which modern ideologists of the peasantry that has put itself on the side of the proletarians have called socialisation of the land, for a gradual but steady transition to joint tillage and large-scale socialist agriculture;

to strengthen and further develop the Federative Republic of Soviets as an immeasurably higher and more progressive form of democracy than bourgeois parliamentarism, and as the sole type of state corresponding, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871 and equally of the experience of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917-18, to the transitional period between capitalism and socialism, i.e., to the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat;

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\* Lenin's "Draft Programme of the R.C.P.(B.);" formed the basis of the Party Programme adopted by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1919.—Ed.

by employing in every way the torch of world socialist revolution lit in Russia to paralyse the attempts of the imperialist bourgeois states to intervene in the internal affairs of Russia or to unite for direct struggle and war against the socialist Soviet Republic and to carry the revolution into the most advanced countries and in general into all countries;

by a number of gradual but undeviating measures to abolish private trading completely and to organise the regular, planned exchange of products between producers' and consumers' communes to form the single economic entity the Soviet Republic must become.

The Russian Communist Party, developing the general tasks of the Soviet government in greater detail, at present formulates them as follows.

### *In the Political Sphere*

Prior to the capture of political power by the proletariat it was (obligatory) necessary to make use of bourgeois democracy, parliamentarism in particular, for the political education and organisation of the working masses; now that the proletariat has won political power and a higher type of democracy is being put into effect in the Soviet Republic, any step backward to bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy would undoubtedly be reactionary service to the interests of the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists. Such catchwords as supposedly popular, national, general, extra-class but actually bourgeois democracy serve the interests of the exploiters alone, and as long as the land and other means of production remain private property the most democratic republic must inevitably remain a bourgeois dictatorship, a machine for the suppression of the overwhelming majority of working people by a handful of capitalists.

The historical task that has fallen to the lot of the Soviet Republic, a new type of state that is transitional until the state disappears altogether, is the following.

(1) The creation and development of universal mass organisations of precisely those classes that are oppressed under capitalism—the proletariat and semi-proletariat. A bourgeois-democratic republic at best permits the organisation of the exploited masses, by declaring them free to organise, but actually has always placed countless obstacles in the way of their organisation, obstacles that were connected with the private ownership of the means of production in a way that made them irremovable. For the first time in history, Soviet power has not only greatly facilitated the organisation of the masses who were oppressed under capitalism, but has made that organisation the essential permanent basis of the entire state apparatus, local and central, from top to bottom. Only in this way is it possible to ensure democracy for the great majority of the population (the working people), i.e., actual participation in state administration, in contrast to the actual administration of the state mainly by members of the bourgeois classes as is the case in the most democratic bourgeois republics.

(2) The Soviet system of state administration gives a certain actual advantage to that section of the working people that all the capitalist development that preceded socialism has made the most concentrated, united, educated and steeled in the struggle, i.e., to the urban industrial proletariat. This advantage must be used systematically and unswervingly to counteract the narrow guild and narrow trade interests that capitalism fostered among the workers and which split them into competitive groups, by uniting the most backward and disunited masses of rural proletarians and semi-proletarians more closely with the advanced workers, by snatching them away from the influence of the village kulaks and village bourgeoisie, and organising and educating them for communist development.

(3) Bourgeois democracy that solemnly announced the equality of all citizens, in actual fact hypocritically concealed the domination of the capitalist exploiters and deceived the masses with the idea that the equality of exploiters

and exploited is possible. The Soviet organisation of the state destroys this deception and this hypocrisy by the implementation of real democracy, i.e., the real equality of all working people, and by excluding the exploiters from the category of members of society possessing full rights. The experience of world history, the experience of all revolts of the exploited classes against their exploiters shows the inevitability of long and desperate resistance of the exploiters in their struggle to retain their privileges. Soviet state organisation is adapted to the suppression of that resistance, for unless it is suppressed there can be no question of a victorious communist revolution.

(4) The more direct influence of the working masses on state structure and administration—i.e., a higher form of democracy—is also effected under the Soviet type of state, first, by the electoral procedure and the possibility of holding elections more frequently, and also by conditions for re-election and for the recall of deputies which are simpler and more comprehensible to the urban and rural workers than is the case under the best forms of bourgeois democracy;

(5) secondly, by making the economic, industrial unit (factory) and not a territorial division the primary electoral unit and the nucleus of the state structure under Soviet power. This closer contact between the state apparatus and the masses of advanced proletarians that capitalism has united, in addition to effecting a higher level of democracy, also makes it possible to effect profound socialist reforms.

(6) Soviet organisation has made possible the creation of armed forces of workers and peasants which are much more closely connected with the working and exploited people than before. If this had not been done it would have been impossible to achieve one of the basic conditions for the victory of socialism—the arming of the workers and the disarming of the bourgeoisie.

(7) Soviet organisation has developed incomparably farther and deeper that feature of bourgeois democracy which marks historically its great progressive nature as compared

with medieval times, i.e., the participation of the people in the election of individuals to office. In none of the most democratic bourgeois states have the working masses ever been able to enjoy the electoral rights formally granted them by the bourgeoisie (who actually hinder their enjoyment) anywhere near as extensively, frequently, universally, easily and simply as they are enjoyed under Soviet power. Soviet power has, at the same time, swept away those negative aspects of bourgeois democracy that the Paris Commune began to abolish, i.e., parliamentarism, or the separation of legislative and executive powers, the narrow, limited nature of which Marxism has long since indicated. By merging the two aspects of government the Soviets bring the state apparatus closer to the working people and remove the fence of the bourgeois parliament that fooled the masses with hypocritical signboards concealing the financial and stock-exchange deals of parliamentary businessmen and ensured the inviolability of the bourgeois apparatus of state administration.

(8) Soviet state organisation alone has enabled the proletarian revolution to smash the old bourgeois state apparatus at one blow and destroy it to the very foundations; had this not been done no start could have been made on socialist development. Those strongholds of the bureaucracy which everywhere, both under monarchies and in the most democratic bourgeois republics, has always kept the state bound to the interests of the landowners and capitalists, have been destroyed in present-day Russia. The struggle against the bureaucracy, however, is certainly not over in our country. The bureaucracy is trying to regain some of its positions and is taking advantage, on the one hand, of the unsatisfactory cultural level of the masses of the people and, on the other, of the tremendous, almost superhuman war efforts of the most developed section of the urban workers. The continuation of the struggle against the bureaucracy, therefore, is absolutely necessary, is imperative, to ensure the success of future socialist development.



(9) Work in this field is closely connected with the implementation of the chief historical purpose of Soviet power, i.e., to advance towards the final abolition of the state, and should consist of the following. First, every member of a Soviet must, without fail, do a certain job of state administration; secondly, these jobs must be consistently changed so that they embrace all aspects of government, all its branches; and, thirdly, literally all the working population must be drawn into independent participation in state administration by means of a series of gradual measures that are carefully selected and unfailingly implemented.

(10) By and large, the difference between bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism on the one hand, and Soviet or proletarian democracy on the other, boils down to this: the centre of gravity of the former is in its solemn and pompous declarations of numerous liberties and rights which the majority of the population, the workers and peasants, cannot enjoy to the full. Proletarian, or Soviet, democracy, on the contrary, has transferred the centre of gravity away from the declaration of rights and liberties for the entire people to the actual participation of none but the working people, who were oppressed and exploited by capital, in the administration of the state, the actual use of the best buildings and other premises for meetings and congresses, the best printing-works and the biggest warehouses (stocks) of paper for the education of those who were stultified and downtrodden under capitalism, and to providing a real (actual) opportunity for those masses gradually to free themselves from the burden of religious prejudices, etc., etc. It is precisely in making the benefits of culture, civilisation and democracy really available to the working and exploited people that Soviet power sees its most important work, work which it must continue unswervingly in the future.

The policy of the R.C.P. on the national question, unlike the bourgeois-democratic declaration of the equality of nations, which cannot be implemented under imperialism, is

that of steadily drawing together and merging the proletarians and the working masses of all nations in their revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Among the working people of the nations that entered into the Russian Empire the mistrust of the Great Russians that has been inherited from the epoch of tsarist and bourgeois Great-Russian imperialism is rapidly vanishing, under the influence of their acquaintance with Soviet Russia, but that mistrust has not yet completely disappeared among all nations and among all sections of the working people. It is, therefore, necessary to exercise special caution in respect of national feelings and to ensure the pursuance of a policy of actual equality and freedom to secede so as to remove the grounds for this mistrust and achieve the close voluntary union of the Soviet republics of all nations. Aid to backward and weak nations must be increased by assisting the independent organisation and education of the workers and peasants of all nations in the struggle against medieval and bourgeois oppression and also by assisting in the development of the language and literature of nations that have been oppressed or have been underprivileged.

In respect of the policy on religion the task of the (R.C.P.) dictatorship of the proletariat must not be confined to decreeing the separation of the church from the state and the school from the church, that is, to measures promised by bourgeois democrats but never fully carried out anywhere in the world because of the many and varied connections actually existing between capital and religious propaganda. The proletarian dictatorship must completely destroy the connection between the exploiting classes—the landowners and capitalists—and the organisation of religious propaganda as something which keeps the masses in ignorance. The proletarian dictatorship must consistently effect the real emancipation of the working people from religious prejudices, doing so by means of propaganda and by raising the political consciousness of the masses but carefully avoiding anything that may hurt the feelings of the religious section

of the population and serve to increase religious fanaticism.

In the sphere of public education, the object of the R.C.P. is to complete the work that began with the October Revolution in 1917 to convert the school from an instrument of the class rule of the bourgeoisie into an instrument for the overthrow of that rule and for the complete abolition of the division of society into classes.

In the period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e., in the period in which conditions are being prepared for the full realisation of communism, the school must be the vehicle, not merely of the general principles of communism but also of the ideological, organisational and educational influence of the proletariat on the semi-proletarian and non-proletarian sections of the working people, in order to train a generation that is fully capable of building communism.

The immediate tasks in this field are, for the present, the following.

(1) The implementation of free, obligatory general and polytechnical education (acquaintance with all the main branches of production theoretically and in practice) for all children of both sexes up to the age of 16.

(2) The closest connection between schooling and productive social labour.

(3) The provision of food, clothing, books and other teaching aids for all schoolchildren at the expense of the state.

(4) Greater agitation and propaganda among school-teachers.

(5) The training of new teaching staffs imbued with communist ideas.

(6) The working people must be drawn into active participation in the work of education (the development of the public education councils, mobilisation of the educated, etc.).

(7) All-round help on the part of Soviet power in the

matter of the self-education and self-development of workers and working peasants (organisation of libraries, schools for adults, people's universities, courses of lectures, cinemas, studios, etc.).

(8) Development of the most extensive propaganda of communist ideas.

The Russian Communist Party, developing the general tasks of the Soviet government in greater detail, at present formulates them as follows.

### *In the Economic Sphere*

The present tasks of Soviet power are:

(1) To continue steadily and finish the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, and the conversion of the means of production and distribution into the property of the Soviet Republic, i.e., into the common property of all working people, which has in the main been completed.

(2) To pay particularly great attention to the development and strengthening of comradely discipline among the working people and to stimulate their initiative and sense of responsibility in every field. This is the most important if not the sole means of completely overcoming capitalism and the habits formed by the rule of the private ownership of the means of production. This aim can be achieved only by slow, persistent work to re-educate the masses; this re-education has not only become possible now that the masses have seen that the landowner, capitalist and merchant have really been eliminated, but is actually taking place in thousands of ways through the practical experience of the workers and peasants themselves. It is extremely important in this respect to work for the further organisation of the working people in trade unions; never before has this organisation developed as rapidly anywhere in the world as under Soviet power, and it must be developed until literally all working people are organised in properly constituted, centralised and disciplined trade unions. We

must not confine ourselves to the old, stereotyped forms of the trade union movement, but must, on the one hand, systematically convert the trade unions into organs administering the economy, carefully checking every step we take against the results of practical work; there must be greater and stronger bonds between the trade unions and the Supreme Economic Council, the Commissariat of Labour and, later, with all other branches of the state administration; on the other hand, the trade unions must to a greater degree become organs for the labour and socialist education of the working masses as a whole so that the practical experience of participation in the administration spreads to the more backward sections of the workers, under the control of the vanguard of the workers.

(3) One of the basic tasks is to raise the level of labour productivity, for without this the full transition to communism is impossible. In addition to lengthy work to educate the masses and raise their cultural level, the achievement of this goal requires the immediate, extensive and comprehensive employment in science and technology of those specialists who have been left us as our heritage from capitalism and, as a rule, are imbued with the bourgeois world outlook and habits. The Party, in close alliance with the trade union organisations, must continue its former line—on the one hand, there must not be the slightest political concession to this bourgeois section of the population, and any counter-revolutionary attempts on its part must be ruthlessly suppressed, and, on the other hand, there must be a relentless struggle against the pseudo-radical but actually ignorant and conceited opinion that the working people are capable of overcoming capitalism and the bourgeois social system without learning from bourgeois specialists, without making use of their services and without undergoing the training of a lengthy period of work side by side with them.

Although our ultimate aim is to achieve full communism and equal remuneration for all kinds of work, we cannot

introduce this equality straightaway, at the present time, when only the first steps of the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken. For a certain period of time, therefore, we must retain the present higher remuneration for specialists in order to give them an incentive to work no worse, and even better, than they have worked before; and with the same object in view we must not reject the system of paying bonuses for the most successful work, particularly organisational work; bonuses would be impermissible under a full communist system but in the period of transition from capitalism to communism bonuses are indispensable, as is borne out by theory and by a year's experience of Soviet power.

We must, furthermore, work consistently to surround the bourgeois specialists with a comradely atmosphere created by working hand in hand with the masses of rank-and-file workers led by politically-conscious Communists; we must not be dismayed by the inevitable individual failures but must strive patiently to arouse in people possessing scientific knowledge a consciousness of how loathsome it is to use science for personal enrichment and for the exploitation of man by man, a consciousness of the more lofty aim of using science for the purpose of making it known to the working people.

(4) The building of communism undoubtedly requires the greatest possible and most strict centralisation of labour on a nation-wide scale, and this presumes overcoming the scattering and disunity of workers, by trades and locally, which was one of the sources of capital's strength and labour's weakness. The struggle against the narrowness and limitations of the guild and against its egoism is closely connected with the struggle to remove the antithesis between town and country; it presents great difficulties and cannot be begun on a broad scale without first achieving a considerable increase in the productivity of the people's labour. A start on this work must, however, be made immediately, if at first only on a small, local scale and by way

of experiment for the purpose of comparing the results of various measures undertaken in different trades and in different places. The mobilisation of the entire able-bodied population by the Soviet government, with the trade unions participating, for certain public works must be much more widely and systematically practised than has hitherto been the case.

(5) In the sphere of distribution, the present task of Soviet power is to continue steadily replacing trade by the planned, organised and nation-wide distribution of goods. The goal is the organisation of the entire population in producers' and consumers' communes that can distribute all essential products most rapidly, systematically, economically and with the least expenditure of labour by strictly centralising the entire distribution machinery. The co-operatives are a transitional means of achieving this aim. The use of them is similar to the use of bourgeois specialists insofar as the co-operative machinery we have inherited from capitalism is in the hands of people whose thinking and business habits are bourgeois. The R.C.P. must systematically pursue the policy of making it obligatory for all members of the Party to work in the co-operatives and, with the aid of the trade unions, direct them in a communist spirit, develop the initiative and discipline of the working people who belong to them, endeavour to get the entire population to join them, and the co-operatives themselves to merge into one single co-operative that embraces the whole of the Soviet Republic. Lastly, and most important, the dominating influence of the proletariat over the rest of the working people must be constantly maintained, and everywhere the most varied measures must be tried with a view to facilitating and bringing about the transition from petty-bourgeois co-operatives of the old capitalist type to producers' and consumers' communes led by proletarians and semi-proletarians.

(6) It is impossible to abolish money at one stroke in the first period of transition from capitalism to communism.

As a consequence the bourgeois elements of the population continue to use privately-owned currency notes—these tokens by which the exploiters obtain the right to receive public wealth—for the purpose of speculation, profit-making and robbing the working population. The nationalisation of the banks is insufficient in itself to combat this survival of bourgeois robbery. The R.C.P. will strive as speedily as possible to introduce the most radical measures to pave the way for the abolition of money, first and foremost to replace it by savings-bank books, cheques, short-term notes entitling the holders to receive goods from the public stores, and so forth, to make it compulsory for money to be deposited in the banks, etc. Practical experience in paving the way for, and carrying out, these and similar measures will show which of them are the most expedient.

(7) In the sphere of finance, the R.C.P. will introduce a graduated income-and-property tax in all cases where it is feasible. But these cases cannot be numerous since private property in land, the majority of factories and other enterprises has been abolished. In the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of the state ownership of the principal means of production, the state finances must be based on the direct appropriation of a certain part of the revenue from the different state monopolies to meet the needs of the state. Revenue and expenditure can be balanced only if the exchange of commodities is properly organised, and this will be achieved by the organisation of producers' and consumers' communes and the restoration of the transport system, which is one of the major immediate objects of the Soviet government.

### *In the Sphere of Agriculture*

After the abolition of private property in land and the [almost] complete expropriation of the landowners and the promulgation of a law on the socialisation of the land which regards as preferable the large-scale farming of commonly-



owned estates, the chief task of Soviet power is to discover and test in practice the most expedient and practical transitional measures to effect this.

The main line and the guiding principle of the R.C.P. agrarian policy under these circumstances still remains the effort to rely on the proletarian and semi-proletarian elements of the countryside. They must first and foremost be organised into an independent force, they must be brought closer to the urban proletariat and wrested from the influence of the rural bourgeoisie and petty-property interests. The organisation of Poor Peasants' Committees was one step in this direction; the organisation of Party cells in the villages, the re-election of deputies to the Soviets to exclude the kulaks, the establishment of special types of trade unions for the proletarians and semi-proletarians of the countryside—all these and similar measures must be effected without fail.

As far as the kulaks, the rural bourgeoisie, are concerned, the policy of the R.C.P. is one of decisive struggle against their attempts at exploitation and the suppression of their resistance to Soviet socialist policy.

As far as the middle peasant is concerned, the policy of the R.C.P. is one of a cautious attitude towards him; he must not be confused with the kulak and coercive measures must not be used against him; by his class position the middle peasant can be the ally of the proletarian government during the transition to socialism, or, at least, he can remain a neutral element. Despite the unavoidable partial failures and waverings of the middle peasant, therefore, we must strive persistently to reach agreement with him, showing a solicitous attitude to all his desires and making concessions in selecting ways of carrying out socialist reforms. In this respect a prominent place must be given to the struggle against the abuses of those representatives of Soviet power who, hypocritically taking advantage of the title of Communist, are carrying out a policy that is not communist but is a policy of the bureaucracy, of

officialdom; such people must be ruthlessly banished and a stricter control established with the aid of the trade unions and by other means.

Insofar as concerns measures for the transition to communist farming, the R.C.P. will test in practice three principal measures that have already taken shape—state farms, agricultural communes and societies (and co-operatives) for the collective tilling of the soil, care being taken to ensure their more extensive and more correct application, especially in respect of ways of developing the voluntary participation of the peasants in these new forms of co-operative farming and of the organisation of the working peasantry to carry out control from below and ensure comradely discipline.

The R.C.P. food policy upholds the consolidation and development of the state monopoly, and does not reject the use of co-operatives and private traders or the employees of trading firms, or the application of a system of bonuses, on the condition that it is controlled by Soviet power and serves the purpose of the better organisation of the business. The partial concessions that have to be made from time to time are only due to the extreme acuteness of need and never imply a refusal to strive persistently to implement the state monopoly. It is very difficult to implement it in a country of small peasant farms, it requires lengthy work and the practical testing of a number of transitional measures that lead to the goal by various ways, i.e., that lead to the universal organisation and correct functioning of producers' and consumers' communes that hand over all food surpluses to the state.

**Resolution  
on the Attitude to the Middle Peasants  
Adopted at the Eighth Congress  
of the R.C.P.(B.)\***

Basing itself on the Party Programme adopted on March 22, 1919, insofar as it concerns work in the rural areas, and giving full support to the law already promulgated by the Soviet government on socialist land settlement and the measures for the transition to socialist farming, the Eighth Congress recognises that at the present time it is particularly important to adhere more strictly to the line of the Party in respect of the middle peasants, to display a more considerate attitude towards their needs, end arbitrary action on the part of the local authorities, and make an effort towards agreement with them.

1) To confuse the middle peasants with the kulaks and to extend to them in one or another degree measures directed against the kulaks is to violate most flagrantly not only all the decrees of the Soviet government and its entire policy, but also all the basic principles of communism, according to which agreement between the proletariat and the middle peasants is one of the conditions for a painless transition to the abolition of all exploitation in the period of decisive struggle waged by the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie.

2) The middle peasants, who have comparatively strong economic roots owing to the lagging of agricultural techniques behind industrial techniques even in the leading capitalist countries, to say nothing of Russia, will continue to exist for quite a long time after the beginning of the proletarian revolution. Therefore, the tactics of the functionaries

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\* This resolution was adopted by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) following the discussion on Lenin's "Report on Work in the Countryside".—*Ed.*

of the Soviets in the villages, as well as of Party functionaries, must envisage a long period of co-operation with the middle peasants.

3) The Party must at all costs ensure that all Soviet functionaries in the countryside have a clear and thorough grasp of the axiom of scientific socialism that the middle peasants are not exploiters since they do not profit by the labour of others. Such a class of small producers cannot lose by socialism, but, on the contrary, will gain a great deal by casting off the yoke of capital which exploits it in a thousand different ways even in a most democratic republic.

The correctly applied policy of Soviet power in the countryside, therefore, ensures alliance and agreement between the victorious proletariat and the middle peasants.

4) While encouraging co-operatives of all kinds as well as agricultural communes of middle peasants, representatives of Soviet power must not allow the slightest coercion to be used in setting them up. Associations are only worth while when they have been set up by the peasants themselves, on their own initiative, and the benefits of them have been verified in practice. Undue haste in this matter is harmful, for it can only strengthen prejudices against innovations among the middle peasants.

Representatives of Soviet power who permit themselves to employ not only direct but even indirect compulsion to bring peasants into communes must be brought strictly to account and removed from work in the countryside.

5) All arbitrary requisitioning, i.e., requisitioning not in conformity with the exact provisions of laws issued by the central authority, must be ruthlessly punished. The Congress insists on the strengthening of control in this field by the People's Commissariat of Agriculture, People's Commissariat of the Interior, and the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

6) At the present time the extreme chaos which has been caused in all countries of the world by the four years of

imperialist war in the predatory interests of the capitalists, and which has become particularly acute in Russia, places the middle peasants in a difficult position.

In view of this, the law issued by the Soviet government on the emergency tax, as distinct from all the laws issued by all the bourgeois governments in the world, makes a point of laying the burden of the tax wholly on the kulaks, the inconsiderable number of peasant exploiters who particularly enriched themselves during the war. The middle peasants must be taxed very mildly, so that the sum levied is fully within their means and not burdensome to them.

The Party demands, in any case, lenience towards the middle peasants in collecting the emergency tax, even if this reduces the total revenue.

7) The socialist state must extend the widest possible aid to the peasants, mainly by supplying the middle peasants with products of urban industries and, especially, improved agricultural implements, seed and various materials in order to raise efficiency in agriculture and ensure improvement of the peasants' working and living conditions.

If the present economic chaos does not allow the immediate and full implementation of these measures, it remains the duty of local Soviet authorities to explore all possible avenues to render the poor and middle peasants any real aid to support them at the present difficult moment. The Party finds it necessary to establish a large state fund for this purpose.

8) In particular, efforts must be made to give real and full effect to the law issued by the Soviet government which requires of state farms, agricultural communes, and all other similar associations that they render immediate and all-round assistance to the middle peasants in their neighbourhood. Only on the basis of such actual assistance is it possible to achieve agreement with the middle peasants. Only in this way can and must their confidence be won.

The Congress draws the attention of all Party workers to the need to put into effect immediately all the points

set forth in the agrarian section of the Party Programme, namely:

(a) regulation of the use of land by the peasants (elimination of scattered holdings, the open field system, etc.), (b) supply of improved seeds and artificial fertilisers to the peasants, (c) improvement of the breeds of the peasants' livestock, (d) spreading of agronomical knowledge, (e) agronomical assistance to the peasants, (f) repair of the peasants' farm implements at repair shops belonging to the Soviets, (g) organisation of centres hiring out implements, experimental stations, model fields, etc., (h) improvements to the peasants' land.

9) Peasants' co-operative associations, with the object of increasing agricultural production, and especially of processing farm produce, improvements to the peasants' land, support of handicraft industries, etc., must be accorded extensive aid, both financial and organisational, by the state.

10) The Congress reminds all concerned that neither the decisions of the Party nor the decrees of Soviet power have ever deviated from the line of agreement with the middle peasants. In the cardinal matter of the organisation of Soviet power in the countryside, for instance, a circular letter signed by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the People's Commissar for Food was issued when the Poor Peasants' Committees were established, pointing to the need to include in these Committees representatives of the middle peasants. When the Poor Peasants' Committees were abolished, the All-Russia Congress of Soviets again pointed to the need to include representatives of the middle peasants in the volost Soviets. The policy of the workers' and peasants' government and the Communist Party must in the future too be permeated by this spirit of agreement between the proletariat and the poor peasants on the one hand, and the middle peasants on the other.

## A Great Beginning

*Heroism of the Workers in the Rear.*  
*"Communist Subbotniks"*

The press reports many instances of the heroism of the Red Army men. In the fight against Kolchak, Denikin and other forces of the landowners and capitalists, the workers and peasants very often display miracles of bravery and endurance, defending the gains of the socialist revolution. The guerrilla spirit, weariness and indiscipline are being overcome; it is a slow and difficult process, but it is making headway in spite of everything. The heroism of the working people making voluntary sacrifices for the victory of socialism—this is the foundation of the new, comradely discipline in the Red Army, the foundation on which that army is regenerating, gaining strength and growing.

The heroism of the workers in the rear is no less worthy of attention. In this connection, the *communist subbotniks* organised by the workers on their own initiative are really of enormous significance. Evidently, this is only a beginning, but it is a beginning of exceptionally great importance. It is the beginning of a revolution that is more difficult, more tangible, more radical and more decisive than the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for it is a victory over our own conservatism, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, a victory over the habits left as a heritage to the worker and peasant by accursed capitalism. Only when *this* victory is consolidated will the new social discipline, socialist discipline, be created; then and only then will a reversion to capitalism become impossible, will communism become really invincible.

*Pravda* in its issue of May 17 published an article by A. J. entitled: "Work in a Revolutionary Way. A Communist Saturday". This article is so important that we reproduce it here in full.

### "WORK IN A REVOLUTIONARY WAY. A COMMUNIST SATURDAY"

"The letter of the Russian Communist Party's Central Committee on working in a *revolutionary way* was a powerful stimulus to communist organisations and to Communists. The general wave of enthusiasm carried many communist railway workers to the front, but the majority of them could not leave their responsible posts or find new forms of working in a revolutionary way. Reports from the localities about the tardiness with which the work of mobilisation was proceeding and the prevalence of red tape compelled the Moscow-Kazan Railway district to turn its attention to the way the railway was functioning. It turned out that, owing to the shortage of labour and low productivity of labour, urgent orders and repairs to locomotives were being held up. At a general meeting of Communists and sympathisers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway district held on May 7, the question was raised of passing from words to deeds in helping to achieve victory over Kolchak. The following resolution was moved:

"In view of the grave domestic and foreign situation, Communists and sympathisers, in order to gain the upper hand over the class enemy, must spur themselves on again and deduct an extra hour from their rest, i.e., lengthen their working day by one hour, accumulate these extra hours and put in six extra hours of manual labour on Saturday for the purpose of creating real values of immediate worth. Since Communists must not grudge their health and life for the gains of the revolution, this work should be performed without pay. *Communist Saturdays* are to be introduced throughout the district and to continue until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved."

"After some hesitation, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

"On Saturday, May 10, at 6 p.m., the Communists and sympathisers turned up to work like soldiers, formed ranks, and without fuss or bustle were taken by the foremen to the various jobs.

"The results of working in a *revolutionary way* are evident. The accompanying table gives the places of work and the character of the work performed.

"The total value of the work performed at ordinary rates of pay is five million rubles; calculated at overtime rates it would be fifty per cent higher.



Place of work	Character of work	Number employed	Hours worked		Work performed
			Per person	Total	
Moscow. Main locomotive shops	Loading materials for the line, devices for repairing locomotives and carriage parts for Perovo, Murom, Alatyr and Syzran	48	5	240	Loaded 7,500 poods Unloaded 1,800 poods
		21	3	63	
		5	4	20	
Moscow. Passenger depot	Complex current repairs to locomotives	26	5	130	Repairs done on 1 1/4 locomotives
Moscow. Shunting yards	Current repairs to locomotives	24	6	144	2 locomotives completed and parts to be repaired dismantled on 4
Moscow. Carriage departments	Current repairs to passenger carriages	12	6	72	2 third-class carriages
Perovo. Main carriage workshops	Carriage repairs and minor repairs on Saturday and Sunday	46	5	230	12 box carriages and two flat carriages
		23	5	115	
	Total . . . . .	205	—	1,014	4 locomotives and 16 carriages turned out and 9,300 poods unloaded and loaded

"The productivity of labour in loading waggons was 270 per cent higher than that of regular workers. The productivity of labour on other jobs was approximately the same.

"Jobs (urgent) were done which had been held up for periods ranging from seven days to three months owing to the shortage of labour and to red tape.

"The work was done in spite of the state of disrepair (easily remedied) of implements, as a result of which certain groups were held up from thirty to forty minutes.

"The administration left in charge of the work could hardly keep pace with the men in finding new jobs for them, and perhaps it was only a slight exaggeration when an old foreman said that as much work was done at this *communist Saturday* as would have been done in a week by non-class-conscious and slack workers.

"In view of the fact that many non-Communists, sincere supporters of the Soviet government, took part in the work, and that many more are expected on future Saturdays, and also in view of the fact that many other districts desire to follow the example of the communist railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway, I shall deal in greater detail with the organisational side of the matter as seen from reports received from the localities.

"Of those taking part in the work, some ten per cent were Communists permanently employed in the localities. The rest were persons occupying responsible and elective posts, from the commissar of the railway to commissars of individual enterprises, representatives of the trade union, and employees of the head office and of the Commissariat of Railways.

"The enthusiasm and team spirit displayed during work were extraordinary. When the workers, clerks and head office employees, without even an oath or argument, caught hold of the forty-pood wheel tire of a passenger locomotive and, like industrious ants, rolled it into place, one's heart was filled with fervent joy at the sight of this collective effort, and one's conviction was strengthened that the victory of the working class was unshakable. The international bandits will not crush the victorious workers; the internal saboteurs will not live to see Kolchak.

"When the work was finished those present witnessed an unprecedented scene: a hundred Communists, weary, but with the light of joy in their eyes, greeted their success with the solemn strains of the *Internationale*. And it seemed as if the triumphant strains of the triumphant anthem would sweep over the walls through the whole of working-class Moscow and that like the waves caused by a stone thrown into a pool they would spread through the whole of working-class Russia and shake up the weary and the slack.

"A. J."

Appraising this remarkable "example worthy of emulation", Comrade N.R. in an article in *Pravda* of May 20 under that heading, wrote:

"Cases of Communists working like this are not rare. I know of similar cases at an electric power station, and on various railways. On the Nikolayevskaya Railway, the Communists worked overtime several nights to lift a locomotive that had fallen into the turn-table pit. In the winter, all the Communists and sympathisers on the Northern Railway worked several Sundays clearing the track of snow; and the Communist cells at many goods stations patrol the stations at night to prevent stealing. But all this work was casual and unsystematic. The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line are making this work systematic and permanent, and this is new. They say in their resolution, 'until complete victory over Kolchak has been achieved', and therein lies the significance of their work. They are lengthening the working day of every Communist and sympathiser by one hour for the duration of the state of war; simultaneously, their productivity of labour is exemplary.

"This example has called forth, and is bound to call forth, further emulation. A general meeting of the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, after discussing the military situation and the resolution adopted by the comrades on the Moscow-Kazan Railway, resolved: (1) to introduce 'subbotniks' for the Communists and sympathisers on the Alexandrovskaya Railway, the first subbotnik to take place on May 17; (2) to organise the Communists and sympathisers in exemplary, model teams which must show the workers how to work and what can really be done with the present materials and tools, and in the present food situation.

"The Moscow-Kazan comrades say that their example has made a great impression and that they expect a large number of non-Party workers to turn up next Saturday. At the time these lines are being written, the Communists have not yet started working overtime in the Alexandrovskaya Railway workshops, but as soon as the rumour spread that they were to do so the mass of non-Party workers stirred themselves. 'We did not know yesterday, otherwise we would have worked as well!' 'I will certainly come next Saturday', can be heard on all sides. The impression created by work of this sort is very great.

"The example set by the Moscow-Kazan comrades should be emulated by all the communist cells in the rear; not only the communist cells at Moscow Junction, but the whole Party organisation in Russia. In the rural districts, too, the communist cells should in the first place set to work to till the fields of Red Army men and thus help their families.

"The comrades on the Moscow-Kazan line finished their first communist subbotnik by singing the *Internationale*. If the communist organisations throughout Russia follow this example and consistently apply it, the Russian Soviet Republic will successfully weather the coming severe months to the mighty strains of the *Internationale* sung by all the working people of the Republic. . . .

"To work, communist comrades!"

On May 23, 1919, *Pravda* reported the following:

*"The first communist 'subbotnik' on the Alexandrovskaya Railway took place on May 17. In accordance with the resolution adopted by their general meeting, ninety-eight Communists and sympathisers worked five hours overtime without pay, receiving in return only the right to purchase a second dinner, and, as manual labourers, half a pound of bread to go with their dinner."*

Although the work was poorly prepared and organised the productivity of labour was nevertheless from two to three times higher than usual.

Here are a few examples.

Five turners turned eighty spindles in four hours. The productivity is 213 per cent of the usual level.

Twenty unskilled workers in four hours collected scrap materials of a total weight of 600 poods, and seventy laminated carriage springs, each weighing  $3\frac{1}{2}$  poods, making a total of 850 poods. Productivity, 300 per cent of the usual level.

"The comrades explain this by the fact that ordinarily their work is boring and tiresome, whereas here they worked with a will and with enthusiasm. Now, however, they will be ashamed to turn out less in regular working hours than they did at the communist subbotnik.

"Now many non-Party workers say that they would like to take part in the subbotniks. The locomotive crews volunteer to take locomotives from the 'cemetery', during a subbotnik, repair them and set them going.

"It is reported that similar subbotniks are to be organised on the Vyazma line."

How the work is done at these communist subbotniks is described by Comrade A. Dyachenko in an article in *Pravda*

of June 7, entitled "Notes of a Subbotnik Worker". We quote the main passages from this article.

"A comrade and I were very pleased to go and do our 'bit' in the subbotnik arranged by a decision of the railway district committee of the Party; for a time, for a few hours, I would give my head a rest and my muscles a bit of exercise. . . . We were detailed off to the railway carpentry shop. We got there, found a number of our people, exchanged greetings, engaged in banter for a bit, counted up our forces and found that there were thirty of us. . . . And in front of us lay a 'monster', a steam boiler weighing no less than six or seven hundred poods; our job was to 'shift' it, i.e., move it over a distance of a quarter or a third of a verst, to its base. We began to have our doubts. . . . However, we started on the job. Some comrades placed wooden rollers under the boiler, attached two ropes to it, and we began to tug away. . . . The boiler gave way reluctantly, but at length it budged. We were delighted. After all, there were so few of us. . . . For nearly two weeks this boiler had resisted the efforts of thrice our number of non-communist workers and nothing could make it budge until we tackled it. . . . We worked for an hour, strenuously, rhythmically, to the command of our 'foreman'—'one, two, three', and the boiler kept on rolling. Suddenly there was confusion, and a number of our comrades went tumbling on to the ground in the funniest fashion. The rope 'let them down'. . . . A moment's delay, and a thicker rope was made fast. . . . Evening. It was getting dark, but we had yet to negotiate a small hillock, and then our job would soon be done. Our arms ached, our palms burned, we were hot and pulled for all we were worth—and were making headway. The 'management' stood round and somewhat shamed by our success, clutched at a rope. 'Lend a hand, it's time you did!' A Red Army man was watching our labours; in his hands he held an accordion. What was he thinking? Who were these people? Why should they work on Saturday when everybody was at home? I solved his riddle and said to him: 'Comrade, play us a jolly tune. We are not raw hands, we are real Communists. Don't you see how fast the work is going under our hands? We are not lazy, we are pulling for all we are worth!' In response, the Red Army man carefully put his accordion on the ground and hastened to grab at a rope end. . . .

"Suddenly Comrade U. struck up the workers' song 'Dubinushka', '*anglichanin mudrets*', he sang, in an excellent tenor voice and we all joined in the refrain of this labour shanty: '*Eh, dubinushka, ukhnem, podyornem, podyornem*. . . .'

"We were unaccustomed to the work, our muscles were weary, our shoulders, our backs ached . . . but the next day would be a free day, our day of rest, and we would be able to get all the sleep we wanted. The goal was near, and after a little hesitation our 'monster' rolled

almost right up to the base. 'Put some boards under, raise it on the base, and let the boiler do the work that has long been expected of it.' We went off in a crowd to the 'club room' of the local Party cell. The room was brightly lit; the walls decorated with posters; rifles stacked around the room. After lustily singing the *Internationale* we enjoyed a glass of tea and 'rum', and even bread. This treat, given us by the local comrades, was very welcome after our arduous toil. We took a brotherly farewell of our comrades and lined up. The strains of revolutionary songs echoed through the slumbering streets in the silence of the night and our measured tread kept time with the music. We sang 'Comrades, the Bugles Are Sounding', 'Arise Ye Starvelings from Your Slumbers', songs of the International and of labour.

"A week passed. Our arms and shoulders were back to normal and we were going to another 'subbotnik', nine versts away this time, to repair railway waggons. Our destination was Perovo. The comrades climbed on the roof of an 'American' box waggon and sang the *Internationale* well and with gusto. The people on the train listened to the singing, evidently in surprise. The wheels knocked a measured beat, and those of us who failed to get on to the roof clung to the steps, pretending to be 'devil-may-care' passengers. The train pulled in. We had reached our destination. We passed through a long yard and were warmly greeted by the commissar, Comrade G.

"There is plenty of work, but few to do it! Only thirty of us, and in six hours we have to do average repairs to a baker's dozen of waggons! Here are twin-wheels already marked. We have not only empty waggons, but also a filled cistern. . . . But that's nothing, we'll 'make a job of it', comrades!"

"Work went with a swing. Five comrades and I were working with hoists. Under pressure of our shoulders and two hoists, and directed by our 'foreman', these twin-wheels, weighing from sixty to seventy poods apiece, skipped from one track to another in the liveliest possible manner. One pair disappeared, another rolled into place. At last all were in their assigned places, and swiftly we shifted the old worn-out junk into a shed. . . . One, two, three—and, raised by a revolving iron hoist, they were dislodged from the rails in a trice. Over there, in the dark, we heard the rapid strokes of hammers; the comrades, like worker bees, were busy on their 'sick' cars. Some were carpentering, others painting, still others were covering roofs, to the joy of the comrade commissar and our own. The smiths also asked for our aid. In a portable smithy a rod with a coupling hook was gleaming white-hot; it had been bent by careless shunting. It was laid on the anvil, scattering white sparks, and, under the experienced direction of the smith, our trusty hammers beat it back into its proper shape. Still red-hot and spitting sparks, we rushed it on our shoulders to where it had to go. We pushed it into its socket. A few hammer strokes and it was fixed.

We crawled under the waggon. The coupling system is not as simple as it looks; there are all sorts of contraptions with rivets and springs...

"Work was in full swing. Night was falling. The torches seemed to burn brighter than before. Soon it would be time to knock off. Some of the comrades were taking a 'rest' against some tires and 'sipping' hot tea. The May night was cool, and the new moon shone beautifully like a gleaming sickle in the sky. People were laughing and joking.

"'Knock off, Comrade G., thirteen waggons are enough!'

"But Comrade G. was not satisfied.

"We finished our tea, broke into our songs of triumph, and marched to the door..."

The movement of "communist subbotniks" is not confined to Moscow. *Pravda* of June 6 reported the following:

"The first communist subbotnik in Tver took place on May 31. One hundred and twenty-eight Communists worked on the railway. In three and a half hours they loaded and unloaded fourteen waggons, repaired three locomotives, cut up ten sages of firewood and performed other work. The productivity of labour of the skilled communist workers was thirteen times above normal."

Again, on June 8 we read in *Pravda*:

### "COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

"Saratov, June 5. In response to the appeal of their Moscow comrades, the communist railway workers here at a general Party meeting resolved: to work five hours overtime on Saturdays without pay in order to support the national economy."



I have given the fullest and most detailed information about the communist subbotniks because in this we undoubtedly observe one of the most important aspects of communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed properly to appreciate.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but living facts of communist construction, taken from and

tested by actual life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organisers, etc., should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged primarily on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracy (like the “slave-owners’ conspiracy” to surrender Petrograd, in which all from the Black Hundreds and Cadets to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were involved\*). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the forefront just as inevitably and ever more imperatively as time goes on, namely, the more important task of positive communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

As I have had occasion to point out more than once, among other occasions in the speech I delivered at a session of the Petrograd Soviet on March 12, the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. The economic foundation of this use of revolutionary force, the guarantee of its effectiveness and success is the fact that the proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable.

The feudal organisation of social labour rested on the discipline of the bludgeon, while the working people, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of landowners, were utterly ignorant and downtrodden. The capitalist organisation of

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\* Lenin refers to the plot to surrender Petrograd organised by the counter-revolutionary “National Centre” in June 1919. The conspirators instigated a revolt at the Krasnaya Gorka, Seraya Loshad and Obruchev forts, intending to weaken the Kronstadt fortified district and, joining forces with the counter-revolutionary army of General Yudenich, seize Petrograd. The revolt was suppressed within a few days and the counter-revolutionary organisation was exposed and liquidated.—*Ed.*



social labour rested on the discipline of hunger, and, notwithstanding all the progress of bourgeois culture and bourgeois democracy, the vast mass of the working people in the most advanced, civilised and democratic republics remained an ignorant and downtrodden mass of wage-slaves or oppressed peasants, robbed and tyrannised by a handful of capitalists. The communist organisation of social labour, the first step towards which is socialism, rests, and will do so more and more as time goes on, on the free and conscious discipline of the working people themselves who have thrown off the yoke both of the landowners and capitalists.

This new discipline does not drop from the skies, nor is it born from pious wishes; it grows out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production, and out of them alone. Without them it is impossible. And the repository, or the vehicle, of these material conditions is a definite historical class, created, organised, united, trained, educated and hardened by large-scale capitalism. This class is the proletariat.

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term "dictatorship of the proletariat" into simpler language, it means just the following:

Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (Let us observe in parenthesis that the only scientific distinction between socialism and communism is that the first term implies the first stage of the new society arising out of capitalism, while the second implies the next and higher stage.)

The mistake the "Berne" yellow International makes is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in word and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion. They are afraid of that in-

evitable conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to them. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is *also* a period of class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes have not been abolished, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the period immediately following the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under different circumstances, in different form and by different means.

And what does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves socialists recognise this as the ultimate goal of socialism, but by no means all give thought to its significance. Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy.

Clearly, in order to abolish classes completely, it is not enough to overthrow the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists, not enough to abolish *their* rights of ownership; it is necessary also to abolish *all* private ownership of the means of production, it is necessary to abolish the distinction between town and country, as well as the distinction between manual workers and brain workers. This requires a very long period of time. In order to achieve this an enormous step forward must be taken in developing the productive forces; it is necessary to overcome the resistance (frequently passive, which is particularly stubborn and particularly difficult to overcome) of the numerous survivals of small-scale production; it is necessary to overcome the

enormous force of habit and conservatism which are connected with these survivals.

The assumption that all "working people" are equally capable of doing this work would be an empty phrase, or the illusion of an antediluvian, pre-Marxist socialist; for this ability does not come of itself, but grows historically, and grows *only* out of the material conditions of large-scale capitalist production. This ability, at the beginning of the road from capitalism to socialism, is possessed by the proletariat *alone*. It is capable of fulfilling the gigantic task that confronts it, first, because it is the strongest and most advanced class in civilised societies; secondly, because in the most developed countries it constitutes the majority of the population, and thirdly, because in backward capitalist countries, like Russia, the majority of the population consists of semi-proletarians, i.e., of people who regularly live in a proletarian way part of the year, who regularly earn a part of their means of subsistence as wage-workers in capitalist enterprises.

Those who try to solve the problems involved in the transition from capitalism to socialism on the basis of general talk about liberty, equality, democracy in general, equality of labour democracy, etc. (as Kautsky, Martov and other heroes of the Berne yellow International do), thereby only reveal their petty-bourgeois, philistine nature and ideologically slavishly follow in the wake of the bourgeoisie. The correct solution of this problem can be found only in a concrete study of the specific relations between the specific class which has conquered political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole non-proletarian, and also semi-proletarian, mass of the working population—relations which do not take shape in fantastically harmonious, "ideal" conditions, but in the real conditions of the frantic resistance of the bourgeoisie which assumes many and diverse forms.

The vast majority of the population—and all the more so of the working population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, have thousands of times experienced, themselves

and through their kith and kin, the oppression of capital, the plunder and every sort of tyranny it perpetrates. The imperialist war, i.e., the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital was to have supremacy in plundering the whole world, has greatly intensified these ordeals, has increased and deepened them, and has made the people realise their meaning. Hence the inevitable sympathy displayed by the vast majority of the population, particularly the working people, for the proletariat, because it is with heroic courage and revolutionary ruthlessness throwing off the yoke of capital, overthrowing the exploiters, suppressing their resistance, and shedding its blood to pave the road for the creation of the new society, in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be their petty-bourgeois vacillations and their tendency to go back to bourgeois "order", under the "wing" of the bourgeoisie, the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian mass of the working population cannot but recognise the moral and political authority of the proletariat, who are not only overthrowing the exploiters and suppressing their resistance, but are building a new and higher social bond, a social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united working people, who know no yoke and no authority except the authority of their own unity, of their own, more class-conscious, bold, solid, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to build and consolidate socialism, the proletariat must fulfil a twofold or dual task: first, it must, by its supreme heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, win over the entire mass of the working and exploited people; it must win them over, organise them and lead them in the struggle to overthrow the bourgeoisie and utterly suppress their resistance. Secondly, it must lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people, as well as all the petty-bourgeois groups, on to the road of new economic development, towards the creation of a new social bond, a new labour discipline, a new organisa-

tion of labour, which will combine the last word in science and capitalist technology with the mass association of class-conscious workers creating large-scale socialist industry.

The second task is more difficult than the first, for it cannot possibly be fulfilled by single acts of heroic fervour; it requires the most prolonged, most persistent and most difficult mass heroism in *plain, everyday* work. But this task is more essential than the first, because, in the last analysis, the deepest source of strength for victories over the bourgeoisie and the sole guarantee of the durability and permanence of these victories can only be a new and higher mode of social production, the substitution of large-scale socialist production for capitalist and petty-bourgeois production.

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"Communist subbotniks" are of such enormous historical significance precisely because they demonstrate the conscious and voluntary initiative of the workers in developing the productivity of labour, in adopting a new labour discipline, in creating socialist conditions of economy and life.

J. Jacoby, one of the few, in fact it would be more correct to say one of the exceptionally rare, German bourgeois democrats who, after the lessons of 1870-71, went over not to chauvinism or national-liberalism, but to socialism, once said that the formation of a single trade union was of greater historical importance than the battle of Sadowa\*. This is true. The battle of Sadowa decided the supremacy of one of two bourgeois monarchies, the Austrian or the Prussian, in creating a German national capitalist state. The formation of one trade union was a small step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. And we may similarly say that the first communist subbotnik, organised by the

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\* *The battle of Sadowa*, fought on July 3, 1866, ended in a victory of the Prussian over the Austrian army and decided the outcome of the Austro-Prussian war.—Ed.

workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway in Moscow on May 10, 1919, was of greater historical significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the 1914-18 imperialist war. The victories of the imperialists mean the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French multimillionaires, they are the atrocities of doomed capitalism, bloated with over-eating and rotting alive. The communist subbotnik organised by the workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new, socialist society, which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capital and from wars.

The bourgeois gentlemen and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are wont to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion", naturally jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call those hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette pot", sneer at the insignificance of the number of subbotniks compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, lower productivity, spoilage of raw materials and finished goods, etc. Our reply to these gentlemen is that if the bourgeois intellectuals had dedicated their knowledge to assisting the working people instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopian, for the issue is decided by the class struggle, and the majority of the intellectuals gravitate towards the bourgeoisie. Not with the assistance of the intellectuals will the proletariat achieve victory, but in spite of their opposition (at least in the majority of cases), removing those of them who are incorrigibly bourgeois, reforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning ever larger sections of them to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic, preaching a return to the past—these are all weapons and methods of class struggle of the bourgeois intellectuals. The proletariat will not allow itself to be deceived by them.

If we get down to brass tacks, however, has it ever happened in history that a new mode of production has taken root immediately, without a long succession of setbacks, blunders and relapses? Half a century after the abolition of serfdom there were still quite a number of survivals of serfdom in the Russian countryside. Half a century after the abolition of slavery in America the position of the Negroes was still very often one of semi-slavery. The bourgeois intellectuals, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, are true to themselves in serving capital and in continuing to use absolutely false arguments—before the proletarian revolution they accused us of being utopian; after the revolution they demand that we wipe out all traces of the past with fantastic rapidity!

We are not utopians, however, and we know the real value of bourgeois “arguments”; we also know that for some time after the revolution traces of the old ethics will inevitably predominate over the young shoots of the new. When the new has just been born the old always remains stronger than it for some time; this is always the case in nature and in social life. Jeering at the feebleness of the young shoots of the new order, cheap scepticism of the intellectuals and the like—these are, essentially, methods of bourgeois class struggle against the proletariat, a defence of capitalism against socialism. We must carefully study the feeble new shoots, we must devote the greatest attention to them, do everything to promote their growth and “nurse” them. Some of them will inevitably perish. We cannot vouch that precisely the “communist subbotniks” will play a particularly important role. But that is not the point. The point is to foster each and every shoot of the new; and life will select the most viable. If the Japanese scientist, in order to help mankind vanquish syphilis, had the patience to test six hundred and five preparations before he developed a six hundred and sixth which met definite requirements, then those who want to solve a more difficult problem, namely, to vanquish capitalism, must have the perseverance to try

hundreds and thousands of new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to elaborate the most suitable of them.

The "communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who were by no means placed in exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various specialities, and some with no speciality at all, just unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary*, i.e., *exceedingly hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is to be observed not only in Russia, but all over the world; it is ruin and impoverishment, embitterment and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and malnutrition. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to do away with starvation, productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. So, we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise productivity of labour.

We know that in practice such contradictions are solved by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a radical change in the temper of the people, by the heroic initiative of the individual groups which often plays a decisive role against the background of such a radical change. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, are organising "communist subbotniks", working overtime *without any pay*, and achieving *an enormous increase in the productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, and exhausted by



malnutrition. Is this not supreme heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of momentous significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social system. Capitalism created a productivity of labour unknown under serfdom. Capitalism can be utterly vanquished, and will be utterly vanquished by socialism creating a new and much higher productivity of labour. This is a very difficult matter and must take a long time; but *it has been started*, and that is the main thing. If in starving Moscow, in the summer of 1919, the starving workers who had gone through four trying years of imperialist war and another year and a half of still more trying civil war could start this great work, how will things develop later when we triumph in the civil war and win peace?

Communism is the higher productivity of labour—compared with that existing under capitalism—of voluntary, class-conscious and united workers employing advanced techniques. Communist subbotniks are extraordinarily valuable as the *actual* beginning of *communism*; and this is a very rare thing, because we are in a stage when “only the *first steps* in the transition from capitalism to communism are being taken” (as our Party Programme quite rightly says).

Communism begins when the *rank-and-file workers* display an enthusiastic concern that is undaunted by arduous toil to increase the productivity of labour, husband *every poond of grain, coal, iron* and other products, which do not accrue to the workers personally or to their “close” kith and kin, but to their “distant” kith and kin, i.e., to society as a whole, to tens and hundreds of millions of people united first in one socialist state, and then in a union of Soviet republics.

In *Capital*, Karl Marx ridicules the pompous and grandiloquent bourgeois-democratic great charter of liberty and the rights of man, ridicules all this phrase-mongering about liberty, equality and fraternity *in general*, which dazzles the petty bourgeois and philistines of all countries, including

the present despicable heroes of the despicable Berne International. Marx contrasts these pompous declarations of rights to the plain, modest, practical, simple manner in which the question is presented by the proletariat—the legislative enactment of a shorter working day is a typical example of such treatment. The aptness and profundity of Marx's observation become the clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The "formulas" of genuine communism differ from the pompous, intricate, and solemn phraseology of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved "brethren" of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about "labour democracy", about "liberty, equality and fraternity", about "government by the people", and all such stuff; the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see through these pompous phrases of the bourgeois intellectual and discern the trickery as easily as a person of ordinary common sense and experience, when glancing at the irreproachably "polished" features and immaculate appearance of the "fain fellow, dontcher know", immediately and unerringly puts him down as "in all probability, a scoundrel".

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern about providing this pood of grain and pood of coal needed by the hungry workers and ragged and barefoot peasants *not* by *haggling*, not in a capitalist manner, but by the conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan line.

We must all admit that vestiges of the bourgeois-intellectual phrase-mongering approach to questions of the revolution are in evidence at every step, everywhere, even in our own ranks. Our press, for example, does little to fight these rotten survivals of the rotten, bourgeois-democratic past; it does little to foster the simple, modest, ordinary but viable shoots of genuine communism.

Take the position of women. In this field, not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in decades so much as a hundredth part of what we did in our very first year in power. We really razed to the ground the infamous laws placing women in a position of inequality, restricting divorce and surrounding it with disgusting formalities, denying recognition to children born out of wedlock, enforcing a search for their fathers, etc., laws numerous survivals of which, to the shame of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism, are to be found in all civilised countries. We have a thousand times the right to be proud of what we have done in this field. But the more *thoroughly* we have cleared the ground of the lumber of the old, bourgeois laws and institutions, the clearer it is to us that we have only cleared the ground to build on but are not yet building.

Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a *domestic slave*, because *petty housework* crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real *emancipation of women*, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its *wholesale transformation* into a large-scale socialist economy begins.

Do we in practice pay sufficient attention to this question, which in theory every Communist considers indisputable? Of course not. Do we take proper care of the *shoots* of communism which already exist in this sphere? Again the answer is no. Public catering establishments, nurseries, kindergartens—here we have examples of these shoots, here we have the simple, everyday means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can *really emancipate women*, really lessen and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public

life. These means are not new, they (like all the material prerequisites for socialism) were created by large-scale capitalism. But under capitalism they remained, first, a rarity, and secondly—which is particularly important—either *profit-making* enterprises, with all the worst features of speculation, profiteering, cheating and fraud, or “acrobatics of bourgeois charity”, which the best workers rightly hated and despised.

There is no doubt that the number of these institutions in our country has increased enormously and that they are *beginning* to change in character. There is no doubt that we have far more *organising talent* among the working and peasant women than we are aware of, that we have far more people than we know of who can organise practical work, with the co-operation of large numbers of workers and of still larger numbers of consumers, without that abundance of talk, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., with which our big-headed “intellectuals” or half-baked “Communists” are “affected”. But we *do not nurse* these shoots of the new as we should.

Look at the bourgeoisie. How very well they know how to advertise what *they* need! See how millions of copies of *their* newspapers extol what the capitalists regard as “model” enterprises, and how “model” bourgeois institutions are made an object of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly ever, to describe the best catering establishments or nurseries, in order, by daily insistence, to get some of them turned into models of their kind. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail the saving in human labour, the conveniences for the consumer, the economy of products, the emancipation of women from domestic slavery, the improvement in sanitary conditions, that can be achieved with *exemplary communist work* and extended to the whole of society, to all working people.

Exemplary production, exemplary communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and dis-

tributing every pood of grain, exemplary catering establishments, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers' house, in such-and-such a block, should all receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from *every* workers' and peasants' organisation, than they receive now. All these are shoots of communism, and it is our common and primary duty to nurse them. Difficult as our food and production situation is, in the year and a half of Bolshevik rule there has been undoubted progress *all along the line*: grain procurements have increased from 30 million poods (from August 1, 1917 to August 1, 1918) to 100 million poods (from August 1, 1918 to May 1, 1919); vegetable gardening has expanded, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve despite the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on. Against this general background, and with the support of the proletarian state power, the shoots of communism will not wither; they will grow and blossom into complete communism.

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We must give very great thought to the significance of the "communist subbotniks", in order that we may draw all the very important practical lessons that follow from this great beginning.

The first and main lesson is that this beginning must be given every assistance. The word "commune" is being handled much too freely. Any kind of enterprise started by Communists or with their participation is very often at once declared to be a "commune", it being not infrequently forgotten that this *very honourable title* must be *won* by prolonged and persistent effort, by *practical* achievement in genuine communist development.

That is why, in my opinion, the decision that has matured in the minds of the majority of the members of the Central Executive Committee to *repeal* the decree of the Council of People's Commissars, as far as it pertains to the title

"consumers' communes",\* is quite right. Let the title be simpler—and, incidentally, the defects and shortcomings of the *initial* stages of the new organisational work will not be blamed on the "communes", but (as in all fairness they should be) on *bad* Communists. It would be a good thing to eliminate the word "commune" from *common* use, to prohibit every Tom, Dick and Harry from grabbing at it, or to *allow this title to be borne only* by genuine communes, which have really demonstrated in practice (and have proved by the unanimous recognition of the whole of the surrounding population) that they are capable of organising their work in a communist manner. First show that you are capable of working without remuneration in the interests of society, in the interests of all the working people, show that you are capable of "working in a revolutionary way", that you are capable of raising productivity of labour, of organising the work in an exemplary manner, and then hold out your hand for the honourable title "commune"!

In this respect, the "communist subbotniks" are a most valuable exception; for the unskilled labourers and railwaymen of the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first demonstrated by deeds* that they are capable of working like *Communists*, and then adopted the title of "communist subbotniks" for their undertaking. We must see to it and make sure that in future anyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having proved* this by hard work and practical *success in prolonged effort*, by exemplary and truly communist organisation, is mercilessly ridiculed and pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

That great beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must

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\* By a decree of the Council of People's Commissars of March 16, 1919, the consumers' co-operatives were reorganised into "consumers' communes", which were meant to be unified distributive organisations. This name led to a misunderstanding of the decree among the peasants of some districts. In view of this the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, in its decision of June 30, 1919, changed the name from "consumers' communes" to "consumers' societies".—Ed.

also be utilised for another purpose, namely, to *purge* the Party. In the early period following the revolution, when the mass of "honest" and philistine-minded people was particularly timorous, and when the bourgeois intellectuals to a man, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, played the lackey to the bourgeoisie and carried on sabotage, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should hitch themselves to the ruling party. There never has been, and there never can be, a revolution without that. The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.

We started this work long ago. It must be continued steadily and untiringly. The mobilisation of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party's ranks. Good riddance! *Such* a reduction in the Party's membership means an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purge, and that new beginning, the "communist subbotniks", must be utilised for this purpose: members should be accepted into the Party only after six months', say, "trial", or "probation", at "working in a revolutionary way". A similar test should be demanded of *all* members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917, and who have not proved by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists.

The purging of the Party, through the steadily *increasing demands* it makes in regard to working in a genuinely communist way, will improve the *state apparatus* and will bring much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

Incidentally, the "communist subbotniks" have thrown a remarkably strong light on the class character of the state apparatus under the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Central Committee of the Party drafts a letter on "working in a revolutionary way". The idea is suggested by the Central Committee of a party with from 100,000 to 200,000

members (I assume that that is the number that will remain after a thorough purging; at present the membership is larger).

The idea is taken up by the workers organised in trade unions. In Russia and the Ukraine they number about four million. The overwhelming majority of them are for the state power of the proletariat, for proletarian dictatorship. Two hundred thousand and four million—such is the ratio of the “gear-wheels”, if one may so express it. Then follow the *tens of millions* of peasants, who are divided into three main groups: the most numerous and the one standing closest to the proletariat is that of the semi-proletarians or poor peasants; then come the middle peasants, and lastly the numerically very small group of kulaks or rural bourgeoisie.

As long as it is possible to trade in grain and to make profit out of famine, the peasant will remain (and this will for some time be inevitable under the dictatorship of the proletariat) a semi-working man, a semi-profitier. As a profitier he is hostile to us, hostile to the proletarian state; he is inclined to agree with the bourgeoisie and their faithful lackeys, up to and including the Menshevik Sher or the Socialist-Revolutionary B. Chernenkov, who stand for freedom to trade in grain. But *as a working man*, the peasant is a friend of the proletarian state, a most loyal ally of the worker in the struggle against the landowner and against the capitalist. As working men, the peasants, the vast mass of them, the peasant millions, support the state “machine” which is headed by the one or two hundred thousand Communists of the proletarian vanguard, and which consists of millions of organised proletarians.

A state more democratic, in the true sense of the word, one more closely connected with the working and exploited people, has *never yet existed*.

It is precisely proletarian work such as that put into “communist subbotniks” that will win the complete respect and love of peasants for the proletarian state. Such work



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and such work alone will completely convince the peasant that we are right, that communism is right, and make him our devoted ally, and, hence, will lead to the complete elimination of our food difficulties, to the complete victory of communism over capitalism in the matter of the production and distribution of grain, to the unqualified consolidation of communism.

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## ***From "Left-Wing" Communism— an Infantile Disorder***

### **I**

#### **In What Sense We Can Speak of the International Significance of the Russian Revolution**

In the first months after the proletariat in Russia had won political power (October 25 [November 7], 1917), it might have seemed that the enormous difference between backward Russia and the advanced countries of Western Europe would lead to the proletarian revolution in the latter countries bearing very little resemblance to ours. We now possess quite considerable international experience, which shows very definitely that certain fundamental features of our revolution have a significance that is not local, or peculiarly national, or Russian alone, but international. I am not speaking here of international significance in the broad sense of the term: not merely several but all the primary features of our revolution, and many of its secondary features, are of international significance in the meaning of its effect on all countries. I am speaking of it in the narrowest sense of the word, taking international significance to mean the international validity or the historical inevitability of a repetition, on an international scale, of what has taken place in our country. It must be admitted that certain fundamental features of our revolution do possess that significance.

It would, of course, be grossly erroneous to exaggerate this truth and to extend it beyond certain fundamental features of our revolution. It would also be erroneous to lose sight of the fact that, soon after the victory of the proletarian revolution in at least one of the advanced countries, a sharp change will probably come about: Russia will cease to be the model and will once again become a backward country (in the "Soviet" and the socialist sense).

At the present moment in history, however, it is the Russian model that reveals to *all* countries something—and something highly significant—of their near and inevitable future. Advanced workers in all lands have long realised this; more often than not, they have grasped it with their revolutionary class instinct rather than realised it. Herein lies the international "significance" (in the narrow sense of the word) of Soviet power, and of the fundamentals of Bolshevik theory and tactics. The "revolutionary" leaders of the Second International, such as Kautsky in Germany and Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler in Austria, have failed to understand this, which is why they have proved to be reactionaries and advocates of the worst kind of opportunism and social treachery. Incidentally, the anonymous pamphlet entitled *The World Revolution (Weltrevolution)*, which appeared in Vienna in 1919 (*Sozialistische Bücherei*, Heft 11; Ignaz Brand\*), very clearly reveals their entire thinking and their entire range of ideas, or, rather, the full extent of their stupidity, pedantry, baseness and betrayal of working-class interests—and that, moreover, under the guise of "defending" the idea of "world revolution".

We shall, however, deal with this pamphlet in greater detail some other time. We shall here note only one more point: in bygone days, when he was still a Marxist and not a renegade, Kautsky, dealing with the question as an historian, foresaw the possibility of a situation arising in which the revolutionary spirit of the Russian proletariat would provide a model to Western Europe. This was in 1902, when Kautsky wrote an article for the revolutionary *Iskra*, entitled "The Slavs and Revolution". Here is what he wrote in the article:

"At the present time [in contrast with 1848]\*\* it would seem that not only have the Slavs entered the ranks of the revolutionary nations,

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\* Ignaz Brand, *Socialist Library*, Vol. 11.—Ed.

\*\* Interpolations in brackets with'n quotations are by Lenin, unless otherwise indicated.—Ed.

but that the centre of revolutionary thought and revolutionary action is shifting more and more to the Slavs. The revolutionary centre is shifting from the West to the East. In the first half of the nineteenth century it was located in France, at times in England. In 1848 Germany too joined the ranks of the revolutionary nations.... The new century has begun with events which suggest the idea that we are approaching a further shift of the revolutionary centre, namely, to Russia .... Russia, which has borrowed so much revolutionary initiative from the West, is now perhaps herself ready to serve the West as a source of revolutionary energy. The Russian revolutionary movement that is now flaring up will perhaps prove to be the most potent means of exercising the spirit of flabby philistinism and coldly calculating politics that is beginning to spread in our midst, and it may cause the fighting spirit and the passionate devotion to our great ideals to flare up again. To Western Europe, Russia has long ceased to be a bulwark of reaction and absolutism. I think the reverse is true today. Western Europe is becoming Russia's bulwark of reaction and absolutism.... The Russian revolutionaries might perhaps have coped with the tsar long ago had they not been compelled at the same time to fight his ally—European capital. Let us hope that this time they will succeed in coping with both enemies, and that the new 'Holy Alliance' will collapse more rapidly than its predecessors did. However the present struggle in Russia may end, the blood and suffering of the martyrs whom, unfortunately, it will produce in too great numbers, will not have been in vain. They will nourish the shoots of social revolution throughout the civilised world and make them grow more luxuriantly and rapidly. In 1848 the Slavs were a killing frost which blighted the flowers of the people's spring. Perhaps they are now destined to be the storm that will break the ice of reaction and irresistibly bring with it a new and happy spring for the nations" (Karl Kautsky, "The Slavs and Revolution", *Iskra*, Russian Social-Democratic revolutionary newspaper, No. 18, March 10, 1902).

How well Karl Kautsky wrote eighteen years ago!

## II

### An Essential Condition of the Bolsheviks' Success

It is, I think, almost universally realised at present that the Bolsheviks could not have retained power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, without the

most rigorous and truly iron discipline in our Party, or without the fullest and unreserved support from the entire mass of the working class, that is, from all thinking, honest, devoted and influential elements in it, capable of leading the backward strata or carrying the latter along with them.

The dictatorship of the proletariat means a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against *a more powerful enemy*, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by their overthrow (even if only in a single country), and whose power lies, not only in the strength of international capital, the strength and durability of their international connections, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small-scale production*. Unfortunately, small-scale production is still widespread in the world, and small-scale production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. All these reasons make the dictatorship of the proletariat necessary, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate life-and-death struggle which calls for tenacity, discipline, and a single and inflexible will.

I repeat: the experience of the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia has clearly shown even to those who are incapable of thinking or have had no occasion to give thought to the matter that absolute centralisation and rigorous discipline in the proletariat are an essential condition of victory over the bourgeoisie.

This is often dwelt on. However, not nearly enough thought is given to what it means, and under what conditions it is possible. Would it not be better if the salutations addressed to the Soviets and the Bolsheviks were *more frequently* accompanied by a *profound analysis* of the reasons *why* the Bolsheviks have been able to build up the discipline needed by the revolutionary proletariat?

As a current of political thought and as a political party, Bolshevism has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *entire* period of its existence can

satisfactorily explain why it has been able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat.

The first questions to arise are: how is the discipline of the proletariat's revolutionary party maintained? How is it tested? How is it reinforced? First, by the class-consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its tenacity, self-sacrifice and heroism. Second, by its ability to link up, maintain the closest contact, and—if you wish—merge, in certain measure, with the broadest masses of the working people—primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the non-proletarian* masses of working people. Third, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided the broad masses have seen, *from their own experience*, that they are correct. Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all attempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end up in phrase-mongering and clowning. On the other hand, these conditions cannot emerge at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by a correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement.

The fact that, in 1917-20, Bolshevism was able, under unprecedentedly difficult conditions, to build up and successfully maintain the strictest centralisation and iron discipline was due simply to a number of historical peculiarities of Russia.

On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 on a very firm foundation of Marxist theory. The correctness of this revolutionary theory, and of it alone, has been proved, not only by world experience throughout the nineteenth century,

but especially by the experience of the seekings and vacillations, the errors and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For about half a century—approximately from the forties to the nineties of the last century—progressive thought in Russia, oppressed by a most brutal and reactionary tsarism, sought eagerly for a correct revolutionary theory, and followed with the utmost diligence and thoroughness each and every "last word" in this sphere in Europe and America. Russia achieved Marxism—the only correct revolutionary theory—through the *agony* she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the political emigration caused by tsarism, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, acquired a wealth of international links and excellent information on the forms and theories of the world revolutionary movement, such as no other country possessed.

On the other hand, Bolshevism, which had arisen on this granite foundation of theory, went through fifteen years of practical history (1903-17) unequalled anywhere in the world in its wealth of experience. During those fifteen years, no other country knew anything even approximating to that revolutionary experience, that rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, local circles and mass movements, and parliamentary and terrorist forms. In no other country has there been concentrated, in so brief a period, such a wealth of forms, shades, and methods of struggle of *all* classes of modern society, a struggle which, owing to the backwardness of the country and the severity of the tsarist yoke, matured with exceptional rapidity, and assimilated most eagerly and successfully the appropriate "last word" of American and European political experience.

### III

#### The Principal Stages In the History of Bolshevism

The years of preparation for revolution (1903-05). The approach of a great storm was sensed everywhere. All classes were in a state of ferment and preparation. Abroad, the press of the political exiles discussed the theoretical aspects of *all* the fundamental problems of the revolution. Representatives of the three main classes, of the three principal political trends—the liberal-bourgeois, the petty-bourgeois-democratic (concealed behind “social-democratic” and “social-revolutionary” labels), and the proletarian-revolutionary—anticipated and prepared the impending open class struggle by waging a most bitter struggle on issues of programme and tactics. *All* the issues on which the masses waged an armed struggle in 1905-07 and 1917-20 can (and should) be studied, in their embryonic form, in the press of the period. Among these three main trends there were, of course, a host of intermediate, transitional or half-hearted forms. It would be more correct to say that those political and ideological trends which were genuinely of a class nature crystallised in the struggle of press organs, parties, factions and groups; the classes were forging the requisite political and ideological weapons for the impending battles.

The years of revolution (1905-07).<sup>1</sup> All classes came out into the open. All programmatical and tactical views were tested by the action of the masses. In its extent and acuteness, the strike struggle had no parallel anywhere in the world. The economic strike developed into a political strike, and the latter into insurrection. The relations between the proletariat, as the leader, and the vacillating and unstable peasantry, as the led, were tested in practice. The Soviet form of organisation came into being in the spontaneous



development of the struggle. The controversies of that period over the significance of the Soviets anticipated the great struggle of 1917-20. The alternation of parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle, of the tactics of boycotting parliament and that of participating in parliament, of legal and illegal forms of struggle, and likewise their interrelations and connections—all this was marked by an extraordinary wealth of content. As for teaching the fundamentals of political science to masses and leaders, to classes and parties alike, each month of this period was equivalent to an entire year of "peaceful" and "constitutional" development. Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the victory of the October Revolution in 1917 would have been impossible.

The years of reaction (1907-10). Tsarism was victorious. All the revolutionary and opposition parties were smashed. Depression, demoralisation, splits, discord, defection, and pornography took the place of politics. There was an ever greater drift towards philosophical idealism; mysticism became the garb of counter-revolutionary sentiments. At the same time, however, it was this great defeat that taught the revolutionary parties and the revolutionary class a real and very useful lesson, a lesson in historical dialectics, a lesson in an understanding of the political struggle, and in the art and science of waging that struggle. It is at moments of need that one learns who one's friends are. Defeated armies learn their lesson.

Victorious tsarism was compelled to speed up the destruction of the remnants of the pre-bourgeois, patriarchal mode of life in Russia. The country's development along bourgeois lines proceeded apace. Illusions that stood outside and above class distinctions, illusions concerning the possibility of avoiding capitalism, were scattered to the winds. The class struggle manifested itself in a quite new and more distinct way.

The revolutionary parties had to complete their education. They were learning how to attack. Now they had to

realise that such knowledge must be supplemented with the knowledge of how to retreat in good order. They had to realise—and it is from bitter experience that the revolutionary class learns to realise this—that victory is impossible unless one has learned how to attack and retreat properly. Of all the defeated opposition and revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks effected the most orderly retreat, with the least loss to their “army”, with its core best preserved, with the least significant splits (in point of depth and incurability), with the least demoralisation, and in the best condition to resume work on the broadest scale and in the most correct and energetic manner. The Bolsheviks achieved this only because they ruthlessly exposed and expelled the revolutionary phrase-mongers, those who did not wish to understand that one had to retreat, that one had to know how to retreat, and that one had absolutely to learn how to work legally in the most reactionary of parliaments, in the most reactionary of trade unions, co-operative and insurance societies and similar organisations.

The years of revival (1910-14). At first progress was incredibly slow, then, following the Lena events of 1912, it became somewhat more rapid. Overcoming unprecedented difficulties, the Bolsheviks thrust back the Mensheviks, whose role as bourgeois agents in the working-class movement was clearly realised by the entire bourgeoisie after 1905, and whom the bourgeoisie therefore supported in a thousand ways against the Bolsheviks. But the Bolsheviks would never have succeeded in doing this had they not followed the correct tactics of combining illegal work with the utilisation of “legal opportunities”, which they made a point of doing. In the elections to the arch-reactionary Duma, the Bolsheviks won the full support of the worker curia.

The First Imperialist World War (1914-17). Legal parliamentarianism, with an extremely reactionary “parliament”, rendered most useful service to the Bolsheviks, the party of the revolutionary proletariat. The Bolshevik deputies were

exiled to Siberia. All shades of social-imperialism, social-chauvinism, social-patriotism, inconsistent and consistent internationalism, pacifism, and the revolutionary repudiation of pacifist illusions found full expression in the Russian émigré press. The learned fools and the old women of the Second International, who had arrogantly and contemptuously turned up their noses at the abundance of "factions" in the Russian socialist movement and at the bitter struggle they were waging among themselves, were unable—when the war deprived them of their vaunted "legality" in *all* the advanced countries—to organise anything even approximating such a free (illegal) interchange of views and such a free (illegal) evolution of correct views as the Russian revolutionaries did in Switzerland and in a number of other countries. That was why both the avowed social-patriots and the "Kautskyites" of all countries proved to be the worst traitors to the proletariat. One of the principal reasons why Bolshevism was able to achieve victory in 1917-20 was that, since the end of 1914, it has been ruthlessly exposing the baseness and vileness of social-chauvinism and "Kautskyism" (to which Longuetism in France, the views of the Fabians and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party in Britain, of Turati in Italy, etc., correspond), the masses later becoming more and more convinced, from their own experience, of the correctness of the Bolshevik views.

The second revolution in Russia (February to October 1917). Tsarism's senility and obsolescence had (with the aid of the blows and hardships of a most agonising war) created an incredibly destructive force directed against it. Within a few days Russia was transformed into a democratic bourgeois republic, freer—in war conditions—than any other country in the world. The leaders of the opposition and revolutionary parties began to set up a government, just as is done in the most "strictly parliamentary" republics; the fact that a man had been a leader of an opposition party in parliament—even in a most reactionary parliament—*facilitated* his subsequent role in the revolution.

In a few weeks the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries thoroughly assimilated all the methods and manners, the arguments and sophistries of the European heroes of the Second International, of the ministerialists and other opportunist riff-raff. Everything we now read about the Scheidemanns and Noskes, about Kautsky and Hilferding, Renner and Austerlitz, Otto Bauer and Fritz Adler, Turati and Longuet, about the Fabians and the leaders of the Independent Labour Party of Britain—all this seems to us (and indeed is) a dreary repetition, a reiteration, of an old and familiar refrain. We have already witnessed all this in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the opportunists of a backward country became the forerunners of the opportunists in a number of advanced countries.

If the heroes of the Second International have all gone bankrupt and have disgraced themselves over the question of the significance and role of the Soviets and Soviet rule; if the leaders of the three very important parties which have now left the Second International (namely, the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, the French Longuevists and the British Independent Labour Party) have disgraced themselves and become entangled in this question in a most "telling" fashion; if they have all shown themselves slaves to the prejudices of petty-bourgeois democracy (fully in the spirit of the petty bourgeois of 1848 who called themselves "Social-Democrats")—then we can only say that we have *already* witnessed *all this* in the instance of the Mensheviks. As history would have it, the Soviets came into being in Russia in 1905; from February to October 1917 they were turned to a false use by the Mensheviks, who went bankrupt because of their inability to understand the role and significance of the Soviets; today the idea of Soviet power has emerged *throughout the world* and is spreading among the proletariat of all countries with extraordinary speed. Like our Mensheviks, the old heroes of the Second International are *everywhere* going bankrupt, because they are incapable of understanding the role and significance of

the Soviets. Experience has proved that, on certain very important questions of the proletarian revolution, *all* countries will inevitably have to do what Russia has done.

Despite views that are today often to be met with in Europe and America, the Bolsheviks began their victorious struggle against the parliamentary and (in fact) bourgeois republic and against the Mensheviks in a very cautious manner, and the preparations they made for it were by no means simple. At the beginning of the period mentioned, we did *not* call for the overthrow of the government but explained that it was impossible to overthrow it *without* first changing the composition and the temper of the Soviets. We did not proclaim a boycott of the bourgeois parliament, the Constituent Assembly, but said—and following the April (1917) Conference of our Party began to state officially in the name of the Party—that a bourgeois republic with a Constituent Assembly would be better than a bourgeois republic without a Constituent Assembly, but that a "workers' and peasants'" republic, a Soviet republic, would be better than any bourgeois-democratic, parliamentary republic. Without such thorough, circumspect and long preparations, we could not have achieved victory in October 1917, or have consolidated that victory.

#### IV

#### **The Struggle Against Which Enemies Within the Working-Class Movement Helped Bolshevism Develop, Gain Strength, and Become Steeled**

First and foremost, the struggle against opportunism, which in 1914 definitely developed into social-chauvinism and definitely sided with the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. Naturally, this was Bolshevism's principal enemy within the working-class movement. It still remains the principal enemy

on an international scale. The Bolsheviks have been devoting the greatest attention to this enemy. This aspect of Bolshevik activities is now fairly well known abroad too.

It was, however, different with Bolshevism's other enemy within the working-class movement. Little is known in other countries of the fact that Bolshevism took shape, developed and became steeled in the long years of struggle against *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*, which smacks of anarchism, or borrows something from the latter and, in all essential matters, does not measure up to the conditions and requirements of a consistently proletarian class struggle. Marxist theory has established—and the experience of all European revolutions and revolutionary movements has fully confirmed—that the petty proprietor, the small master (a social type existing on a very extensive and even mass scale in many European countries), who, under capitalism, always suffers oppression and very frequently a most acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions of life, and even ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organisation, discipline and steadfastness. A petty bourgeois driven to frenzy by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which, like anarchism, is characteristic of all capitalist countries. The instability of such revolutionism, its barrenness, and its tendency to turn rapidly into submission, apathy, phantasms, and even a frenzied infatuation with one bourgeois fad or another—all this is common knowledge. However, a theoretical or abstract recognition of these truths does not at all rid revolutionary parties of old errors, which always crop up at unexpected occasions, in somewhat new forms, in a hitherto unfamiliar garb or surroundings, in an unusual—a more or less unusual—situation.

Anarchism was not infrequently a kind of penalty for the opportunist sins of the working-class movement. The two monstrosities complemented each other. And if in Russia—despite the more petty-bourgeois composition of her population as compared with the other European countries—

anarchism's influence was negligible during the two revolutions (of 1905 and 1917) and the preparations for them, this should no doubt stand partly to the credit of Bolshevism, which has always waged a most ruthless and uncompromising struggle against opportunism. I say "partly", since of still greater importance in weakening anarchism's influence in Russia was the circumstance that in the past (the seventies of the nineteenth century) it was able to develop inordinately and to reveal its absolute erroneousness, its unfitness to serve the revolutionary class as a guiding theory.

When it came into being in 1903, Bolshevism took over the tradition of a ruthless struggle against petty-bourgeois, semi-anarchist (or dilettante-anarchist) revolutionism, a tradition which had always existed in revolutionary Social-Democracy and had become particularly strong in our country during the years 1900-03, when the foundations for a mass party of the revolutionary proletariat were being laid in Russia. Bolshevism took over and carried on the struggle against a party which, more than any other, expressed the tendencies of petty-bourgeois revolutionism, namely, the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, and waged that struggle on three main issues. First, that party, which rejected Marxism, stubbornly refused (or, it might be more correct to say: was unable) to understand the need for a strictly objective appraisal of the class forces and their alignment, before taking any political action. Second, this party considered itself particularly "revolutionary", or "Left" because of its recognition of individual terrorism, assassination—something that we Marxists emphatically rejected. It was, of course, only on grounds of expediency that we rejected individual terrorism, whereas people who were capable of condemning "on principle" the terror of the Great French Revolution, or, in general, the terror employed by a victorious revolutionary party which is besieged by the bourgeoisie of the whole world, were ridiculed and laughed to scorn by Plekhanov in 1900-03, when he was a Marxist and a revolutionary. Third, the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" thought

it very "Left" to sneer at the comparatively insignificant opportunist sins of the German Social-Democratic Party, while they themselves imitated the extreme opportunists of that party, for example, on the agrarian question, or on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

History, incidentally, has now confirmed on a vast and world-wide scale the opinion we have always advocated, namely, that German *revolutionary* Social-Democracy (note that as far back as 1900-03 Plekhanov demanded Bernstein's expulsion from the Party, and in 1913 the Bolsheviks, always continuing this tradition, exposed Legien's baseness, villainess and treachery) *came closest* to being the party the revolutionary proletariat needs in order to achieve victory. Today, in 1920, after all the ignominious failures and crises of the war period and the early post-war years, it can be plainly seen that, of all the Western parties, the German revolutionary Social-Democrats produced the finest leaders, and recovered and gained new strength more rapidly than the others did. This may be seen in the instances both of the Spartacists and the Left, proletarian wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which is waging an incessant struggle against the opportunism and spinelessness of the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Ledebours and Crispiens. If we now cast a glance to take in a complete historical period, namely, from the Paris Commune to the first Socialist Soviet Republic, we shall find that Marxism's attitude to anarchism in general stands out most definitely and unmistakably. In the final analysis, Marxism proved to be correct, and although the anarchists rightly pointed to the opportunist views on the state prevalent among most of the socialist parties, it must be said, first that this opportunism was connected with the distortion, and even deliberate suppression, of Marx's views on the state (in my book, *The State and Revolution*, I pointed out that for thirty-six years, from 1875 to 1911, Bebel withheld a letter by Engels, which very clearly, vividly, bluntly and definitively exposed the opportunism of the current Social-Democratic views on the state); second, that the



rectification of these opportunist views, and the recognition of Soviet power and its superiority to bourgeois parliamentary democracy proceeded most rapidly and extensively among those trends in the socialist parties of Europe and America that were most Marxist.

The struggle that Bolshevism waged against "Left" deviations within its own Party assumed particularly large proportions on two occasions: in 1908, on the question of whether or not to participate in a most reactionary "parliament" and in the legal workers' societies, which were being restricted by most reactionary laws; and again in 1918 (the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk), on the question of whether one "compromise" or another was permissible.

In 1908 the "Left" Bolsheviks were expelled from our Party for stubbornly refusing to understand the necessity of participating in a most reactionary "parliament". The "Lefts"—among whom there were many splendid revolutionaries who subsequently were (and still are) commendable members of the Communist Party—based themselves particularly on the successful experience of the 1905 boycott. When, in August 1905, the tsar proclaimed the convocation of a consultative "parliament", the Bolsheviks called for its boycott, in the teeth of all the opposition parties and Mensheviks, and the "parliament" was in fact swept away by the revolution of October 1905. The boycott proved correct at the time, not because non-participation in reactionary parliaments is correct in general, but because we accurately appraised the objective situation, which was leading to the rapid development of the mass strikes first into a political strike, then into a revolutionary strike, and finally into an uprising. Moreover, the struggle centred at that time on the question of whether the convocation of the first representative assembly should be left to the tsar, or an attempt should be made to wrest its convocation from the old regime. When there was not, and could not be, any certainty that the objective situation was of a similar kind, and when there was no certainty of a similar trend

and the same rate of development, the boycott was no longer correct.

The Bolsheviks' boycott of "parliament" in 1905 enriched the revolutionary proletariat with highly valuable political experience and showed that, when legal and illegal, parliamentary and non-parliamentary forms of struggle are combined, it is sometimes useful and even essential to reject parliamentary forms. It would, however, be highly erroneous to apply this experience blindly, imitatively and uncritically to *other* conditions and *other* situations. The Bolsheviks' boycott of the Duma in 1906 was a mistake, although a minor and easily remediable one.\* The boycott of the Duma in 1907, 1908 and subsequent years was a most serious error and difficult to remedy, because, on the one hand, a very rapid rise of the revolutionary tide and its conversion into an uprising was not to be expected, and, on the other hand, the entire historical situation attendant upon the renovation of the bourgeois monarchy called for legal and illegal activities being combined. Today, when we look back at this fully completed historical period, whose connection with subsequent periods has now become quite clear, it becomes most obvious that in 1908-14 the Bolsheviks *could not have* preserved (let alone strengthened and developed) the core of the revolutionary party of the proletariat, had they not upheld, in a most strenuous struggle, the viewpoint that it was *obligatory* to combine legal and illegal forms of struggle, and that it was *obligatory* to participate even in a most reactionary parliament and in a number of other institutions hemmed in by reactionary laws (sick benefit societies, etc.).

In 1918 things did not reach a split. At that time the

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\* What applies to individuals also applies—with necessary modifications—to politics and parties. It is not he who makes no mistakes that is intelligent. There are no such men, or can there be. It is he whose errors are not very grave and who is able to rectify them easily and quickly that is intelligent.

"Left" Communists formed only a separate group or "faction" within our Party, and that not for long. In the same year, 1918, the most prominent representatives of "Left Communism", for example, Comrades Radek and Bukharin, openly acknowledged their error. It had seemed to them that the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was a compromise with the imperialists, which was inexcusable on principle and harmful to the party of the revolutionary proletariat. It was indeed a compromise with the imperialists, but it was a compromise which, under the circumstances, *had to be made*.

Today, when I hear our tactics in signing the Brest-Litovsk Treaty being attacked by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, for instance, or when I hear Comrade Lansbury say, in a conversation with me, "Our British trade union leaders say that if it was permissible for the Bolsheviks to compromise, it is permissible for them to compromise too", I usually reply by first of all giving a simple and "popular" example:

Imagine that your car is held up by armed bandits. You hand them over your money, passport, revolver and car. In return you are rid of the pleasant company of the bandits. That is unquestionably a compromise. "*Do ut des*" (I "give" you money, fire-arms and a car "so that you give" me the opportunity to get away from you with a whole skin). It would, however, be difficult to find a sane man who would declare such a compromise to be "inadmissible on principle", or who would call the compromiser an accomplice of the bandits (even though the bandits might use the car and the fire-arms for further robberies). Our compromise with the bandits of German imperialism was just that kind of compromise.

But when, in 1914-18 and then in 1918-20, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia, the Scheide-mannites (and to a large extent the Kautskyites) in Germany, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler (to say nothing of the Renners and Co.) in Austria, the Renaudels and Longuets

and Co. in France, the Fabians, the Independents and the Labourites in Britain entered into *compromises* with the bandits of their own bourgeoisie, and sometimes of the "Allied" bourgeoisie, and *against* the revolutionary proletariat of their own countries, all these gentlemen were actually acting as *accomplices in banditry*.

The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises "on principle", to reject the permissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to consider seriously. A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must be able to distinguish *concrete* cases of compromises that are inexcusable and are an expression of opportunism and *treachery*; he must direct all the force of criticism, the full intensity of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *these concrete* compromises, and not allow the past masters of "practical" socialism and the parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by means of disquisitions on "compromises in general". It is in this way that the "leaders" of the British trade unions, as well as of the Fabian society and the "Independent" Labour Party, dodge responsibility *for the treachery they have perpetrated*, for having made a *compromise* that is really tantamount to the worst kind of opportunism, treachery and betrayal.

There are different kinds of compromises. One must be able to analyse the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise, or of each variety of compromise. One must learn to distinguish between a man who has given up his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to lessen the evil they can do and to facilitate their capture and execution, and a man who gives his money and fire-arms to bandits so as to share in the loot. In politics this is by no means always as elementary as it is in this childishly simple example. However, anyone who is out to think up for the workers some kind of recipe that will provide them with cut-and-dried solutions for all contingencies, or promises that the policy of the revolutionary proletariat will never

come up against difficult or complex situations, is simply a charlatan.

To leave no room for misinterpretation, I shall attempt to outline, if only, very briefly, several fundamental rules for the analysis of concrete compromises.

The party which entered into a compromise with the German imperialists by signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had been evolving its internationalism in practice ever since the end of 1914. It was not afraid to call for the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and to condemn "defence of country" in a war between two imperialist robbers. The parliamentary representatives of this party preferred exile in Siberia to taking a road leading to ministerial portfolios in a bourgeois government. The revolution that overthrew tsarism and established a democratic republic put this party to a new and tremendous test—it did not enter into any agreements with its "own" imperialists, but prepared and brought about their overthrow. When it had assumed political power, this party did not leave a vestige of either landed or capitalist ownership. After making public and repudiating the imperialists' secret treaties, this party proposed peace to *all* nations, and yielded to the violence of the Brest-Litovsk robbers only after the Anglo-French imperialists had torpedoed the conclusion of a peace, and after the Bolsheviks had done everything humanly possible to hasten the revolution in Germany and other countries. The absolute correctness of this compromise, entered into by such a party in such a situation, is becoming ever clearer and more obvious with every day.

The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia (like all the leaders of the Second International throughout the world, in 1914-20) began with treachery—by directly or indirectly justifying "defence of country", i.e., the defence of *their own* predatory bourgeoisie. They continued their treachery by entering into a coalition with the bourgeoisie of *their own* country, and fighting, together with *their own* bourgeoisie, against the revolutionary proletariat of their own

country. Their bloc, first with Kerensky and the Cadets, and then with Kolchak and Denikin in Russia—like the bloc of their *confrères* abroad with the bourgeoisie of *their* respective countries—was in fact desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie, against the proletariat. From beginning to end, *their* compromise with the bandits of imperialism meant their becoming *accomplices* in imperialist banditry.

## V

### **“Left-Wing” Communism in Germany. The Leaders, the Party, the Class, the Masses**

The German Communists we must now speak of call themselves, not “Left-wingers” but, if I am not mistaken, an “opposition on principle”. From what follows below it will, however, be seen that they reveal all the symptoms of the “infantile disorder of Leftism”.

Published by the “local group in Frankfurt am Main”, a pamphlet reflecting the point of view of this opposition, and entitled *The Split in the Communist Party of Germany (The Spartacus League)* sets forth the substance of this opposition’s views most saliently, and with the utmost clarity and concision. A few quotations will suffice to acquaint the reader with that substance:

“The Communist Party is the party of the most determined class struggle....”

“...Politically, the transitional period [between capitalism and socialism] is one of the proletarian dictatorship....”

“...The question arises: who is to exercise this dictatorship: *the Communist Party or the proletarian class?*... *Fundamentally*, should we strive for a dictatorship of the Communist Party, or for a dictatorship of the proletarian class?...”

(All italics as in the original.)

The author of the pamphlet goes on to accuse the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany of seeking ways of achieving a *coalition with the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany*, and of raising "*the question of recognising, in principle, all political means*" of struggle, including parliamentarianism, with the sole purpose of concealing its actual and main efforts to form a coalition with the Independents. The pamphlet goes on to say:

"The opposition have chosen another road. They are of the opinion that the question of the rule of the Communist Party and of the dictatorship of the Party is merely one of tactics. In any case, rule by the Communist Party is the ultimate form of any party rule. *Fundamentally*, we must work for the dictatorship of the proletarian class. And all the measures of the Party, its organisations, methods of struggle, strategy and tactics should be directed to that end. Accordingly, all compromise with other parties, all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, and any policy of manoeuvring and compromise must be emphatically rejected." "Specifically proletarian methods of revolutionary struggle must be strongly emphasised. New forms of organisation must be created on the widest basis and with the widest scope in order to enlist the most extensive proletarian circles and strata to take part in the revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party. A *Workers' Union*, based on factory organisations, should be the rallying point for all revolutionary elements. This should unite all workers who follow the slogan: 'Get out of the trade unions!' It is here that the militant proletariat musters its ranks for battle. Recognition of the class struggle, of the Soviet system and of the dictatorship should be sufficient for enrolment. All subsequent political education of the fighting masses and their political orientation in the struggle are the task of the Communist Party, which stands outside the *Workers' Union*...

"...Consequently, two Communist parties are now arrayed against each other:

"*One is a party of leaders*, which is out to organise the revolutionary struggle and to direct it from *above*, accepting compromises and parliamentarianism so as to create a situation enabling it to join a coalition government exercising a dictatorship.

"*The other is a mass party*, which expects an upsurge of the revolutionary struggle from *below*, which knows and applies a single method in this struggle—a method which clearly leads to the goal—and rejects all parliamentary and opportunist methods. That single method is the

unconditional *overthrow of the bourgeoisie*, so as then to set up the proletarian class dictatorship for the accomplishment of socialism....

"...There—the dictatorship of leaders; here—the dictatorship of the masses! That is our slogan."

Such are the main features characterising the views of the opposition of the German Communist Party.

Any Bolshevik who has consciously participated in the development of Bolshevism since 1903 or has closely observed that development will at once say, after reading these arguments, "What old and familiar rubbish! What 'Left-wing' childishness!"

But let us examine these arguments a little more closely.

The mere presentation of the question—"dictatorship of the party *or* dictatorship of the class; dictatorship (party) of the leaders, *or* dictatorship (party) of the masses?"—testifies to most incredibly and hopelessly muddled thinking. These people want to *invent* something quite out of the ordinary, and, in their effort to be clever, make themselves ridiculous. It is common knowledge that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted with classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social system of production, with categories, holding a definite status in the social system of production; that as a rule and in most cases—at least in present-day civilised countries—classes are led by political parties; that political parties, as a general rule, are run by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions, and are called leaders. All this is elementary. All this is clear and simple. Why replace this with some kind of rigmarole, some new Volapük? On the one hand, these people seem to have got muddled when they found themselves in a predicament, when the party's abrupt transition from legality to illegality upset the customary, normal and simple relations between leaders, parties and classes. In Germany, as in other European countries, people



had become too accustomed to legality, to the free and proper election of "leaders" at regular party congresses, to the convenient method of testing the class composition of parties through parliamentary elections, mass meetings, the press, the sentiments of the trade unions and other associations, etc. When, instead of this customary procedure, it became necessary, because of the stormy development of the revolution and the development of the civil war, to go over rapidly from legality to illegality, to combine the two, and to adopt the "inconvenient" and "undemocratic" methods of selecting, or forming, or preserving "groups of leaders"—people lost their bearings and began to think up some unmitigated nonsense. Certain members of the Communist Party of Holland, who were unlucky enough to be born in a small country with traditions and conditions of highly privileged and highly stable legality, and who had never seen a transition from legality to illegality, probably fell into confusion, lost their heads, and helped create these absurd inventions.

On the other hand, one can see simply a thoughtless and incoherent use of the now "fashionable" terms: "masses" and "leaders". These people have heard and memorised a great many attacks on "leaders", in which the latter have been contrasted with the "masses"; however, they have proved unable to think matters out and gain a clear understanding of what it was all about.

The divergence between "leaders" and "masses" was brought out with particular clarity and sharpness in all countries at the end of the imperialist war and following it. The principal reason for this was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892, from the example of Britain. That country's exclusive position led to the emergence, from the "masses", of a semi-petty-bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy". The leaders of this labour aristocracy were constantly going over to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly on its pay roll. Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred

of these disreputable persons by openly branding them as traitors. Present-day (twentieth-century) imperialism has given a few advanced countries an exceptionally privileged position, which, everywhere in the Second International, has produced a certain type of traitor, opportunist, and social-chauvinist leaders, who champion the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy. The opportunist parties have become separated from the "masses", i.e., from the broadest strata of the working people, their majority, the lowest-paid workers. The revolutionary proletariat cannot be victorious unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitor leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled. That is the policy the Third International has embarked on.

To go so far, in this connection, as to contrast, *in general*, the dictatorship of the masses with a dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd, and stupid. What is particularly amusing is that, in fact, instead of the old leaders, who hold generally accepted views on simple matters, *new leaders* are brought forth (under cover of the slogan "Down with the leaders!"), who talk rank stuff and nonsense. Such are Laufenberg, Wolffheim, Horner, Karl Schröder, Friedrich Wendel and Karl Erler,\* in Germany. Erler's attempts

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\* Karl Erler, "The Dissolution of the Party", *Kommunistische Arbeiterzeitung*, Hamburg, February 7, 1920, No. 32: "The working class cannot destroy the bourgeois state without destroying bourgeois democracy, and it cannot destroy bourgeois democracy without destroying parties."

The more muddle-headed of the syndicalists and anarchists in the Latin countries may derive "satisfaction" from the fact that solid Germans, who evidently consider themselves Marxists (by their articles in the above-mentioned paper K. Erler and K. Horner have shown most plainly that they consider themselves sound Marxists, but talk incredible nonsense in a most ridiculous manner and reveal their failure to understand the ABC of Marxism), go to the length of making utterly inapt statements. Mere acceptance of Marxism does not save one from errors. We Russians know this especially well, because Marxism has been very often the "fashion" in our country.

to give the question more "profundity" and to proclaim that in general political parties are unnecessary and "bourgeois" are so supremely absurd that one can only shrug one's shoulders. It all goes to drive home the truth that a minor error can always assume monstrous proportions if it is persisted in, if profound justifications are sought for it, and if it is carried to its logical conclusion.

Repudiation of the Party principle and of Party discipline—that is what the opposition has *arrived at*. And this is tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat *in the interests of the bourgeoisie*. It all adds up to that petty-bourgeois diffuseness and instability, that incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organised action, which, if encouraged, must inevitably destroy any proletarian revolutionary movement. From the standpoint of communism, repudiation of the Party principle means attempting to leap from the eve of capitalism's collapse (in Germany), not to the lower of the intermediate phase of communism, but to the higher. We in Russia (in the third year since the overthrow of the bourgeoisie) are making the first steps in the transition from capitalism to socialism or the lower stage of communism. Classes still remain, and will remain everywhere *for years after* the proletariat's conquest of power. Perhaps in Britain, where there is no peasantry (but where petty proprietors exist), this period may be shorter. The abolition of classes means, not merely ousting the landowners and the capitalists—that is something we accomplished with comparative ease; it also means *abolishing the small commodity producers*, and they *cannot be ousted*, or crushed; we *must learn to live* with them. They can (and must) be transformed and re-educated only by means of very prolonged, slow, and cautious organisational work. They surround the proletariat on every side with a petty-bourgeois atmosphere, which permeates and corrupts the proletariat, and constantly causes among the proletariat relapses into petty-bourgeois spinelessness, disunity, individualism, and alternating moods of exaltation and dejection.

tion. The strictest centralisation and discipline are required within the political party of the proletariat in order to counteract this, in order that the *organisational* role of the proletariat (and that is its *principal* role) may be exercised correctly, successfully and victoriously. The dictatorship of the proletariat means a persistent struggle—bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative—against the forces and traditions of the old society. The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force. Without a party of iron that has been tempered in the struggle, a party enjoying the confidence of all honest people in the class in question, a party capable of watching and influencing the mood of the masses, such a struggle cannot be waged successfully. It is a thousand times easier to vanquish the centralised big bourgeoisie than to “vanquish” the millions upon millions of petty proprietors; however, through their ordinary, everyday, imperceptible, elusive and demoralising activities, they produce the *very* results which the bourgeoisie need and which tend to *restore* the bourgeoisie. Whoever brings about even the slightest weakening of the iron discipline of the party of the proletariat (especially during its dictatorship), is actually aiding the bourgeoisie against the proletariat.

Parallel with the question of the leaders—the party—the class—the masses, we must pose the question of the “reactionary” trade unions. But first I shall take the liberty of making a few concluding remarks based on the experience of our Party. There *have always been* attacks on the “dictatorship of leaders” in our Party. The first time I heard such attacks, I recall, was in 1895, when, officially, no party yet existed, but a central group was taking shape in St. Petersburg, which was to assume the leadership of the district groups. At the Ninth Congress of our Party (April 1920) there was a small opposition, which also spoke against the “dictatorship of leaders”, against the “oligarchy”, and so on. There is therefore nothing surprising, new, or terrible in the

"infantile disorder" of "Left-wing communism" among the Germans. The ailment involves no danger, and after it the organism even becomes more robust. In our case, on the other hand, the rapid alternation of legal and illegal work, which made it necessary to keep the general staff—the leaders—under cover and cloak them in the greatest secrecy, sometimes gave rise to extremely dangerous consequences. The worst of these was that in 1912 the *agent provocateur* Malinovsky got into the Bolshevik Central Committee. He betrayed scores and scores of the best and most loyal comrades, caused them to be sentenced to penal servitude, and hastened the death of many of them. That he did not cause still greater harm was due to the correct balance between legal and illegal work. As member of the Party's Central Committee and Duma deputy, Malinovsky was forced, in order to gain our confidence, to help us establish legal daily papers, which even under tsarism were able to wage a struggle against the Menshevik opportunism and to spread the fundamentals of Bolshevism in a suitably disguised form. While, with one hand, Malinovsky sent scores and scores of the finest Bolsheviks to penal servitude and death, he was obliged, with the other, to assist in the education of scores and scores of thousands of new Bolsheviks through the medium of the legal press. Those German (and also British, American, French and Italian) comrades who are faced with the task of learning how to conduct revolutionary work within the reactionary trade unions would do well to give serious thought to this fact.\*

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\* Malinovsky was a prisoner of war in Germany. On his return to Russia when the Bolsheviks were in power he was instantly put on trial and shot by our workers. The Mensheviks attacked us most bitterly for our mistake—the fact that an *agent provocateur* had become a member of the Central Committee of our Party. But when, under Kerensky, we demanded the arrest and trial of Rodzyanko, the Chairman of the Duma, because he had known, even before the war, that Malinovsky was an *agent provocateur* and had not informed the Trudoviks and the workers in the Duma, neither the Mensheviks nor the Socialist-

In many countries, including the most advanced, the bourgeoisie are undoubtedly sending *agents provocateurs* into the Communist parties and will continue to do so. A skilful combining of illegal and legal work is one of the ways to combat this danger.

## VI

### Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions?

The German "Lefts" consider that, as far as they are concerned, the reply to this question is an unqualified negative. In their opinion, declamations and angry outcries (such as uttered by K. Horner in a particularly "solid" and particularly stupid manner) against "reactionary" and "counter-revolutionary" trade unions are sufficient "proof" that it is unnecessary and even inexcusable for revolutionaries and Communists to work in yellow, social-chauvinist, compromising and counter-revolutionary trade unions of the Legien type.

However firmly the German "Lefts" may be convinced of the revolutionism of such tactics, the latter are in fact fundamentally wrong, and contain nothing but empty phrases.

To make this clear, I shall begin with our own experience, in keeping with the general plan of the present pamphlet, which is aimed at applying to Western Europe whatever is universally practicable, significant and relevant in the history and the present-day tactics of Bolshevism.

In Russia today, the connection between leaders, party,

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Revolutionaries in the Kerensky government supported our demand, and Rodzyanko remained at large and made off unhindered to join Denikin.

class and masses, as well as the attitude of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its party to the trade unions, are concretely as follows: the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organised in the Soviets; the proletariat is guided by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, which, according to the figures of the latest Party Congress (April 1920), has a membership of 611,000. The membership varied greatly both before and after the October Revolution, and used to be much smaller, even in 1918 and 1919.\* We are apprehensive of an excessive growth of the Party, because careerists and charlatans, who deserve only to be shot, inevitably do all they can to insinuate themselves into the ranks of the ruling party. The last time we opened wide the doors of the Party—to workers and peasants only—was when (in the winter of 1919) Yudenich was within a few versts of Petrograd, and Denikin was in Orel (about 350 versts from Moscow), i.e., when the Soviet Republic was in mortal danger, and when adventurers, careerists, charlatans and unreliable persons generally could not possibly count on making a profitable career (and had more reason to expect the gallows and torture) by joining the Communists.\*\* The Party, which holds annual congresses (the most recent on the basis of one delegate per 1,000 members), is directed by a Central Committee of nineteen elected at the Congress, while the current work in Moscow has to be carried on by still smaller bodies, known as the Organising Bureau and the Political Bureau, which are elected at plenary meetings of

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\* Between the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution and 1919 inclusively, the Party's membership changed as follows: by the Seventh All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) in April 1917 the Party numbered 80,000 members; by the Sixth R.S.D.L.P.(B.) Congress in July-August 1917—about 240,000; by the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1918—not less than 300,000; by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1919—313,766 members.—*Ed.*

\*\* The reference is to the "Party Week" which was conducted between August and November 1919, when the Soviet state was fighting all out against the foreign military intervention and the counter-revolution at home.—*Ed.*

the Central Committee, five members of the Central Committee to each bureau. This, it would appear, is a full-fledged "oligarchy". No important political or organisational question is decided by any state institution in our republic without the guidance of the Party's Central Committee.

In its work, the Party relies directly on the *trade unions*, which, according to the data of the last congress (April 1920), now have a membership of over four million and are formally *non-Party*. Actually, all the directing bodies of the vast majority of the unions, and primarily, of course, of the all-Russia general trade union centre or bureau (the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions), are made up of Communists and carry out all the directives of the Party. Thus, on the whole, we have a formally non-communist, flexible and relatively wide and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked up with the *class* and the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *class dictatorship* is exercised. Without close contacts with the trade unions, and without their energetic support and devoted efforts, not only in economic, *but also in military* affairs, it would of course have been impossible for us to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years. In practice, these very close contacts naturally call for highly complex and diversified work in the form of propaganda, agitation, timely and frequent conferences, not only with the leading trade union workers, but with influential trade union workers generally; they call for a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain though very small following to whom they teach all kinds of counter-revolutionary machinations, ranging from an ideological defence of (*bourgeois*) democracy and the preaching that the trade unions should be "independent" (independent of proletarian state power!) to sabotage of proletarian discipline, etc., etc.

We consider that contacts with the "masses" through the trade unions are not enough. In the course of our revo-



lution, practical activities have given rise to such institutions as *non-Party workers' and peasants' conferences*, and we strive by every means to support, develop and extend this institution in order to be able to observe the temper of the masses, come closer to them, meet their requirements, promote the best among them to state posts, etc. Under a recent decree on the transformation of the People's Commissariat of State Control into the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, non-Party conferences of this kind have been empowered to select members of the State Control to carry out various kinds of investigations, etc.

Then, of course, all the work of the Party is carried on through the Soviets, which embrace the working masses, irrespective of occupation. The district congresses of Soviets are *democratic* institutions, the like of which even the best of the democratic republics of the bourgeois world have never known; through these congresses (whose proceedings the Party endeavours to follow with the closest attention), as well as by continually appointing class-conscious workers to various posts in the rural districts, the proletariat exercises its role of leader of the peasantry, gives effect to the dictatorship of the urban proletariat, wages a systematic struggle against the rich, bourgeois, exploiting and profiteering peasantry, etc.

Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian state power viewed "from above", from the standpoint of the practical implementation of the dictatorship. We hope that the reader will understand why the Russian Bolshevik, who has known this mechanism for twenty-five years and has seen it develop out of small, illegal and underground circles, cannot help regarding all this talk about "from above" or "from below", about the dictatorship of leaders or the dictatorship of the masses, etc., as ridiculous and childish nonsense, something like discussing whether a man's left leg or right arm is of greater use to him.

We cannot but regard as equally ridiculous and childish nonsense the pompous, very learned, and frightfully revolu-

tionary disquisitions of the German Lefts to the effect that Communists cannot and should not work in reactionary trade unions, that it is permissible to turn down such work, that it is necessary to withdraw from the trade unions and create a brand-new and immaculate "Workers' Union" invented by very pleasant (and, probably, for the most part very youthful) Communists, etc., etc.

Capitalism inevitably leaves socialism the legacy, on the one hand, of the old trade and craft distinctions among the workers, distinctions evolved in the course of centuries; on the other hand, trade unions, which only very slowly, in the course of years and years, can and will develop into broader industrial unions with less of the craft union about them (embracing entire industries, and not only crafts, trades and occupations), and later proceed, through these industrial unions, to eliminate the division of labour among people, to educate and school people, give them *all-round development and an all-round training*, so that they *are able to do everything*. Communism is advancing and must advance towards that goal, and *will reach* it, but only after very many years. To attempt in practice, today, to anticipate this future result of a fully developed, fully stabilised and constituted, fully comprehensive and mature communism would be like trying to teach higher mathematics to a child of four.

We can (and must) begin to build socialism, not with abstract human material, or with human material specially prepared by us, but with the human material bequeathed to us by capitalism. True, that is no easy matter, but no other approach to this task is serious enough to warrant discussion.

The trade unions were a tremendous step forward for the working class in the early days of capitalist development, inasmuch as they marked a transition from the workers' disunity and helplessness to the *rudiments* of class organisation. When the *revolutionary party of the proletariat*, the *highest* form of proletarian class organisation, began to

take shape (and the Party will not merit the name until it learns to weld the leaders into one indivisible whole with the class and the masses) the trade unions inevitably began to reveal *certain* reactionary features, a certain craft narrow-mindedness, a certain tendency to be non-political, a certain inertness, etc. However, the development of the proletariat did not, and could not, proceed anywhere in the world otherwise than through the trade unions, through reciprocal action between them and the party of the working class. The proletariat's conquest of political power is a gigantic step forward for the proletariat as a class, and the Party must more than ever and in a new way, not only in the old, educate and guide the trade unions, at the same time bearing in mind that they are and will long remain an indispensable "school of communism" and a preparatory school that trains proletarians to exercise their dictatorship, an indispensable organisation of the workers for the gradual transfer of the management of the whole economic life of the country to the working *class* (and not to the separate trades), and later to all the working people.

In the sense mentioned above, a *certain* "reactionism" in the trade unions is *inevitable* under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Not to understand this means a complete failure to understand the fundamental conditions of the *transition* from capitalism to socialism. It would be egregious folly to fear *this* "reactionism" or to try to *evade* or leap over it, for it would mean fearing that function of the proletarian vanguard which consists in training, educating, enlightening and drawing into the new life the most backward strata and masses of the working class and the peasantry. On the other hand, it would be a still graver error to postpone the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat until a time when there will not be a single worker with a narrow-minded craft outlook, or with craft and craft-union prejudices. The art of politics (and the Communist's correct understanding of his tasks) consists in correctly gauging the conditions and the moment when

the vanguard of the proletariat can successfully assume power, when it is able—during and after the seizure of power—to win adequate support from sufficiently broad strata of the working class and of the non-proletarian working masses, and when it is able thereafter to maintain, consolidate and extend its rule by educating, training and attracting ever broader masses of the working people.

Further. In countries more advanced than Russia, a certain reactionism in the trade unions has been and was bound to be manifested in a far greater measure than in our country. Our Mensheviks found support in the trade unions (and to some extent still do so in a small number of unions), as a result of the latter's craft narrow-mindedness, craft selfishness and opportunism. The Mensheviks of the West have acquired a much firmer footing in the trade unions; there the *craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, case-hardened, covetous, and petty-bourgeois "labour aristocracy", imperialist-minded, and imperialist-corrupted*, has developed into a much stronger section than in our country. That is incontestable. The struggle against the Gomperses, and against the Jouhaux, Hendersons, Merrheims, Legiens and Co. in Western Europe is much more difficult than the struggle against our Mensheviks, who are an *absolutely homogeneous* social and political type. This struggle must be waged ruthlessly, and it must unfailingly be brought—as we brought it—to a point when all the incorrigible leaders of opportunism and social-chauvinism are completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions. Political power cannot be captured (and the attempt to capture it should not be made) until the struggle has reached a *certain* stage. This "certain stage" will be *different* in different countries and in different circumstances; it can be correctly gauged only by thoughtful, experienced and knowledgeable political leaders of the proletariat in each particular country. (In Russia the elections to the Constituent Assembly in November 1917, a few days after the proletarian revolution of Octo-

ber 25, 1917, were one of the criteria of the success of this struggle. In these elections the Mensheviks were utterly defeated; they received 700,000 votes—1,400,000 if the vote in Transcaucasia is added—as against 9,000,000 votes polled by the Bolsheviks. See my article, "The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat", in the *Communist International* No. 7-8.)

We are waging a struggle against the "labour aristocracy" in the name of the masses of the workers and in order to win them over to our side; we are waging the struggle against the opportunist and social-chauvinist leaders in order to win the working class over to our side. It would be absurd to forget this most elementary and most self-evident truth. Yet it is this very absurdity that the German "Left" Communists perpetrate when, *because* of the reactionary and counter-revolutionary character of the trade union *top leadership*, they jump to the conclusion that... we must withdraw from the trade unions, refuse to work in them, and create new and *artificial* forms of labour organisation! This is so unpardonable a blunder that it is tantamount to the greatest service Communists could render the bourgeoisie. Like all the opportunist, social-chauvinist, and Kautskyite trade union leaders, our Mensheviks are nothing but "agents of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement" (as we have always said the Mensheviks are), or "labour lieutenants of the capitalist class", to use the splendid and profoundly true expression of the followers of Daniel De Leon in America. To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or "workers who have become completely bourgeois" (cf. Engels' letter to Marx in 1855 about the British workers\*).

This ridiculous "theory" that Communists should not

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\* See Engels' letter to Marx of October 7, 1855.—Ed.

work in reactionary trade unions reveals with the utmost clarity the frivolous attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the "masses", and their misuse of clamour about the "masses". If you want to help the "masses" and win the sympathy and support of the "masses", you should not fear difficulties, or pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution from the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must absolutely *work wherever the masses are to be found*. You must be capable of any sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most reactionary—in which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are to be found. The trade unions and the workers' co-operatives (the latter sometimes, at least) are the very organisations in which the masses are to be found. According to figures quoted in the Swedish paper *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* of March 10, 1920, the trade union membership in Great Britain increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6,600,000 at the end of 1918, an increase of 19 per cent. Towards the close of 1919, the membership was estimated at 7,500,000. I have not got the corresponding figures for France and Germany to hand, but absolutely incontestable and generally known facts testify to a rapid rise in the trade union membership in these countries too.

These facts make crystal clear something that is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms, namely, that class-consciousness and the desire for organisation are growing among the proletarian masses, among the rank and file, among the backward elements. Millions of workers in Great Britain, France and Germany are *for the first time* passing from a complete lack of organisation to the elementary, lowest, simplest, and (to those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most easily compre-

hensible form of organisation, namely, the trade unions; yet the revolutionary but imprudent Left Communists stand by, crying out "the masses", "the masses!" but *refusing to work within the trade unions*, on the pretext that they are "reactionary", and invent a brand-new, immaculate little "Workers' Union", which is guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices and innocent of craft or narrow-minded craft-union sins, a union which, they claim, will be (!) a broad organisation. "Recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship" will be the *only* (!) condition of membership. (See the passage quoted above.)

It would be hard to imagine any greater ineptitude or greater harm to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries! Why, if we in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of trade union membership, we would be doing a very foolish thing, damaging our influence among the masses, and helping the Mensheviks. The task devolving on Communists is to *convince* the backward elements, to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them with artificial and childish "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that the Gomperses, the Hendersons, the Jouhaux and the Legiens are very grateful to those "Left" revolutionaries who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "principles"!), or like some of the revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World advocate quitting the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them. These men, the "leaders" of opportunism, will no doubt resort to every device of bourgeois diplomacy and to the aid of bourgeois governments, the clergy, the police and the courts, to keep Communists out of the trade unions, oust them by every means, make their work in the trade unions as unpleasant as possible, and insult, bait and persecute them. We must be able to stand up to all this, agree to make any sacrifice,

and even—if need be—to resort to various stratagems, artifices and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges, as long as we get into the trade union, remain in them, and carry on communist work within them at all costs. Under tsarism we had no “legal opportunities” whatsoever until 1905. However, when Zubatov, agent of the secret police, organised Black-Hundred workers’ assemblies and working-men’s societies for the purpose of trapping revolutionaries and combating them, we sent members of our Party to these assemblies and into these societies (I personally remember one of them, Comrade Babushkin, a leading St. Petersburg factory worker, shot by order of the tsar’s generals in 1906). They established contacts with the masses, were able to carry on their agitation, and succeeded in wresting workers from the influence of Zubatov’s agents.\* Of course, in Western Europe, which is imbued with most deep-rooted legalistic, constitutionalist and bourgeois-democratic prejudices, this is more difficult of achievement. However, it can and must be carried out, and systematically at that.

The Executive Committee of the Third International must, in my opinion, positively condemn, and call upon the next congress of the Communist International to condemn both the policy of refusing to work in reactionary trade unions in general (explaining in detail why such refusal is unwise, and what extreme harm it does to the cause of the proletarian revolution) and, in particular, the line of conduct of some members of the Communist Party of Holland, who—whether directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly, wholly or partly, it does not matter—have supported this erroneous policy. The Third International must break with the tactics of the Second International; it must not evade

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\* The Gomperses, Hendersons, Jouhaux and Legiens are nothing but Zubatovs, differing from our Zubatov only in their European garb and polish, and the civilised, refined and democratically suave manner of conducting their despicable policy.



or play down points at issue, but must pose them in a straightforward fashion. The whole truth has been put squarely to the "Independents" (the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany); the whole truth must likewise be put squarely to the "Left" Communists.

## VII

### Should We Participate in Bourgeois Parliaments?

It is with the utmost contempt—and the utmost levity—that the German "Left" Communists reply to this question in the negative. Their arguments? In the passage quoted above we read:

"...All reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete, must be emphatically rejected..."

This is said with ridiculous pretentiousness, and is patently wrong. "Reversion" to parliamentarianism, forsooth! Perhaps there is already a Soviet republic in Germany? It does not look like it! How, then, can one speak of "reversion"? Is this not an empty phrase?

Parliamentarianism has become "historically obsolete". That is true in the propaganda sense. However, everybody knows that this is still a far cry from overcoming it in *practice*. Capitalism could have been declared—and with full justice—to be "historically obsolete" many decades ago, but that does not at all remove the need for a very long and very persistent struggle *on the basis* of capitalism. Parliamentarianism is "historically obsolete" from the standpoint of *world history*, i.e., the *era* of bourgeois parliamentarianism is over, and the *era* of the proletarian dictatorship has *begun*. That is incontestable. But world history is counted in decades. Ten or twenty years earlier

or later makes no difference when measured with the yardstick of world history; from the standpoint of world history it is a trifle that cannot be considered even approximately. But for that very reason, it is a glaring theoretical error to apply the yardstick of world history to practical politics.

Is parliamentarianism "politically obsolete"? That is quite a different matter. If that were true, the position of the "Lefts" would be a strong one. But it has to be proved by a most searching analysis, and the "Lefts" do not even know how to approach the matter. In the "Theses on Parliamentarianism", published in the *Bulletin of the Provisional Bureau in Amsterdam of the Communist International* No. 1, February 1920, and obviously expressing the Dutch-Left or Left-Dutch strivings, the analysis, as we shall see, is also hopelessly poor.

In the first place, contrary to the opinion of such outstanding political leaders as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the German "Lefts", as we know, considered parliamentarianism "politically obsolete" even in January 1919. We know that the "Lefts" were mistaken. This fact alone utterly destroys, at a single stroke, the proposition that parliamentarianism is "politically obsolete". It is for the "Lefts" to prove why their error, indisputable at that time, is no longer an error. They do not and cannot produce even a shred of proof. A political party's attitude towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it fulfils *in practice* its obligations towards its *class* and the *working people*. Frankly acknowledging a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the conditions that have led up to it, and thrashing out the means of its rectification—that is the hallmark of a serious party; that is how it should perform its duties, and how it should educate and train its *class*, and then the *masses*. By failing to fulfil this duty and give the utmost attention and consideration to the study of their patent error, the "Lefts" in Germany (and in Holland) have proved that they are not a *party of a class*, but

a circle, not a *party of the masses*, but a group of intellectualists and of a few workers who ape the worst features of intellectualism.

Second, in the same pamphlet of the Frankfurt group of "Lefts", which we have already cited in detail, we read:

"...The millions of workers who still follow the policy of the Centre [the Catholic "Centre" Party] are counter-revolutionary. The rural proletarians provide the legions of counter-revolutionary troops." (Page 3 of the pamphlet.)

Everything goes to show that this statement is far too sweeping and exaggerated. But the basic fact set forth here is incontrovertible, and its acknowledgement by the "Lefts" is particularly clear evidence of their mistake. How can one say that "parliamentarianism is politically obsolete", when "millions" and "legions" of *proletarians* are not only still in favour of parliamentarianism in general, but are downright "counter-revolutionary"! It is obvious that parliamentarianism in Germany is *not yet* politically obsolete. It is obvious that the "Lefts" in Germany have mistaken *their desire*, their politico-ideological attitude, for objective reality. That is a most dangerous mistake for revolutionaries to make. In Russia—where, over a particularly long period and in particularly varied forms, the most brutal and savage yoke of tsarism produced revolutionaries of diverse shades, revolutionaries who displayed amazing devotion, enthusiasm, heroism and will power—in Russia we have observed this mistake of the revolutionaries at very close quarters; we have studied it very attentively and have a first-hand knowledge of it; that is why we can also see it especially clearly in others. Parliamentarianism is of course "politically obsolete" to the Communists in Germany; but—and that is the whole point—we must *not* regard what is obsolete *to us* as something obsolete *to a class, to the masses*. Here again we find that the "Lefts" do not know how to reason, do not know how to act as the party of a *class*, as the party of the *masses*. You must not

sink to the level of the masses, to the level of the backward strata of the class. That is incontestable. You must tell them the bitter truth. You are in duty bound to call their bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices what they are—prejudices. But at the same time you must *soberly* follow the *actual* state of the class-consciousness and preparedness of the entire class (not only of its communist vanguard), and of all the *working people* (not only of their advanced elements).

Even if only a fairly large *minority* of the industrial workers, and not “millions” and “legions”, follow the lead of the Catholic clergy—and a similar minority of rural workers follow the landowners and kulaks (Grossbauern)—it *undoubtedly* signifies that parliamentarianism in Germany has *not yet* politically outlived itself, that participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* on the party of the revolutionary proletariat *specifically* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, and for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden and ignorant rural *masses*. Whilst you lack the strength to do away with bourgeois parliaments and every other type of reactionary institution, you *must* work within them because *it is there* that you will still find workers who are duped by the priests and stultified by the conditions of rural life; otherwise you risk turning into nothing but windbags.

Third, the “Left” Communists have a great deal to say in praise of us Bolsheviks. One sometimes feels like telling them to praise us less and to try to get a better knowledge of the Bolsheviks’ tactics. We took part in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Russian bourgeois parliament, in September-November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? If not, then this should be clearly stated and proved, for it is necessary in evolving the correct tactics for international communism. If they were correct, then certain conclusions must be drawn. Of course, there can be no question of placing conditions in Russia on a par with

conditions in Western Europe. But as regards the particular question of the meaning of the concept that "parliamentarianism has become politically obsolete", due account should be taken of our experience, for unless concrete experience is taken into account such concepts very easily turn into empty phrases. In September-November 1917, did we, the Russian Bolsheviks, not have *more* right than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarianism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we did, for the point is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long time or a short time, but how far the masses of the working people are *prepared* (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to dissolve the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dissolved). It is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact that, in September-November 1917, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were, because of a number of special conditions, exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and disband the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did *not* boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before *and after* the proletariat conquered political power. That these elections yielded exceedingly valuable (and to the proletariat, highly useful) political results *has*, I make bold to hope, been proved by me in the above-mentioned article, which analyses in detail the returns of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia.

The conclusion which follows from this is absolutely incontrovertible: it has been proved that, far from causing harm to the revolutionary proletariat, participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament, even a few weeks before the victory of a Soviet republic and even *after* such a victory, actually helps that proletariat to *prove* to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be done away with; it *facilitates* their successful dissolution, and *helps* to make bourgeois parliamentarianism "politically

obsolete". To ignore this experience, while at the same time claiming affiliation to the Communist *International*, which must work out its tactics *internationally* (not as narrow or exclusively national tactics, but as international tactics), means committing a gross error and actually abandoning internationalism in deed, while recognising it in word.

Now let us examine the "Dutch-Left" arguments in favour of non-participation in parliaments. The following is the text of Thesis No. 4, the most important of the above-mentioned "Dutch" theses:

"When the capitalist system of production has broken down, and society is in a state of revolution, parliamentary action gradually loses importance as compared with the action of the masses themselves. When, in these conditions, parliament becomes the centre and organ of the counter-revolution, whilst, on the other hand, the labouring class builds up the instruments of its power in the Soviets, it may even prove necessary to abstain from all and any participation in parliamentary action."

The first sentence is obviously wrong, since action by the masses, a big strike, for instance, is more important than parliamentary activity at *all* times, and not only during a revolution or in a revolutionary situation. This obviously untenable and historically and politically incorrect argument merely shows very clearly that the authors completely ignore both the general European experience (the French experience before the revolutions of 1848 and 1870; the German experience of 1878-90, etc.) and the Russian experience (see above) of the importance of *combining* legal and illegal struggle. This question is of immense importance both in general and in particular, because in *all* civilised and advanced countries the time is rapidly approaching when such a combination will more and more become—and has already partly become—mandatory on the party of the revolutionary proletariat, inasmuch as civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is maturing and is imminent, and because of savage persecution of the Communists by republican governments and bourgeois governments generally, which resort to any violation of legality (the

example of America is edifying enough), etc. The Dutch, and the Lefts in general, have utterly failed to understand this highly important question.

The second sentence is, in the first place, historically wrong. We Bolsheviks participated in the most counter-revolutionary parliaments, and experience has shown that this participation was not only useful but indispensable to the party of the revolutionary proletariat, after the first bourgeois revolution in Russia (1905), so as to pave the way for the second bourgeois revolution (February 1917), and then for the socialist revolution (October 1917). In the second place, this sentence is amazingly illogical. If a parliament becomes an organ and a "centre" (in reality it never has been and never can be a "centre", but that is by the way) of counter-revolution, while the workers are building up the instruments of their power in the form of the Soviets, then it follows that the workers must prepare—ideologically, politically and technically—for the struggle of the Soviets against parliament, for the dispersal of parliament by the Soviets. But it does not at all follow that this dispersal is hindered, or is not facilitated, by the presence of a Soviet opposition *within* the counter-revolutionary parliament. In the course of our victorious struggle against Denikin and Kolchak, we never found that the existence of a Soviet and proletarian opposition in their camp was immaterial to our victories. We know perfectly well that the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly on January 5, 1918 was not hampered but was actually facilitated by the fact that, within the counter-revolutionary Constituent Assembly which was about to be dispersed, there was a consistent Bolshevik, as well as an inconsistent, Left Socialist-Revolutionary Soviet opposition. The authors of the thesis are engaged in muddled thinking; they have forgotten the experience of many, if not all, revolutions, which shows the great usefulness, during a revolution, of a combination of mass action outside a reactionary parliament with an opposition sympathetic to (or, better still, directly

supporting) the revolution within it. The Dutch, and the "Lefts" in general, argue in this respect like doctrinaires of the revolution, who have never taken part in a real revolution, have never given thought to the history of revolutions, or have naïvely mistaken subjective "rejection" of a reactionary institution for its actual destruction by the combined operation of a number of objective factors. The surest way of discrediting and damaging a new political (and not only political) idea is to reduce it to absurdity on the plea of defending it. For any truth, if "overdone" (as Dietzgen Senior put it), if exaggerated, or if carried beyond the limits of its actual applicability, can be reduced to an absurdity, and is even bound to become an absurdity under these conditions. That is just the kind of disservice the Dutch and German Lefts are rendering to the new truth of the Soviet form of government being superior to bourgeois-democratic parliaments. Of course, anyone would be in error who voiced the outmoded viewpoint or in general considered it impermissible, in all and any circumstances, to reject participation in bourgeois parliaments. I cannot attempt here to formulate the conditions under which a boycott is useful, since the object of this pamphlet is far more modest, namely, to study Russian experience in connection with certain topical questions of international communist tactics. Russian experience has provided us with one successful and correct instance (1905), and another that was incorrect (1906), of the use of a boycott by the Bolsheviks. Analysing the first case, we see that we succeeded in *preventing* a reactionary government from *convening* a reactionary parliament in a situation in which extra-parliamentary revolutionary mass action (strikes in particular) was developing at great speed, when not a single section of the proletariat and the peasantry could support the reactionary government in any way, and when the revolutionary proletariat was gaining influence over the backward masses through the strike struggle and through the agrarian movement. It is quite obvious that *this* experience is not applicable to pres-



ent-day European conditions. It is likewise quite obvious—and the foregoing arguments bear this out—that the advocacy, even if with reservations, by the Dutch and the other "Lefts" of refusal to participate in parliaments is fundamentally wrong and detrimental to the cause of the revolutionary proletariat.

In Western Europe and America, parliament has become most odious to the revolutionary vanguard of the working class. That cannot be denied. It can readily be understood, for it is difficult to imagine anything more infamous, vile or treacherous than the behaviour of the vast majority of socialist and Social-Democratic parliamentary deputies during and after the war. It would, however, be not only unreasonable but actually criminal to yield to this mood when deciding *how* this generally recognised evil should be fought. In many countries of Western Europe, the revolutionary mood, we might say, is at present a "novelty", or a "rarity", which has all too long been vainly and impatiently awaited; perhaps that is why people so easily yield to that mood. Certainly, without a revolutionary mood among the masses, and without conditions facilitating the growth of this mood, revolutionary tactics will never develop into action. In Russia, however, lengthy, painful and sanguinary experience has taught us the truth that revolutionary tactics cannot be built on a revolutionary mood alone. Tactics must be based on a sober and strictly objective appraisal of *all* the class forces in a particular state (and of the states that surround it, and of all states the world over) as well as of the experience of revolutionary movements. It is very easy to show one's "revolutionary" temper merely by hurling abuse at parliamentary opportunism, or merely by repudiating participation in parliaments; its very ease, however, cannot turn this into a solution of a difficult, a very difficult, problem. It is far more difficult to create a really revolutionary parliamentary group in a European parliament than it was in Russia. That stands to reason. But it is only a particular expression of the general truth that it was easy

for Russia, in the specific and historically unique situation of 1917, to *start* the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to *continue* the revolution and bring it to its consummation. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Certain specific conditions, viz., (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this revolution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree; (2) the possibility of taking temporary advantage of the mortal conflict between the world's two most powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to adopt the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of whose members were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realise them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat—all these specific conditions do not at present exist in Western Europe, and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not occur so easily. Incidentally, apart from a number of other causes, that is why it is more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us. To attempt to "circumvent" this difficulty by "skipping" the arduous job of utilising reactionary parliaments for revolutionary purposes is absolutely childish. You want to create a new society, yet you fear the difficulties involved in forming a good parliamentary group made up of convinced, devoted and heroic Communists, in a reactionary parliament! Is that not childish? If Karl Liebknecht in Germany and Z. Höglund in Sweden were able, even without mass support from below, to set examples of the

truly revolutionary utilisation of reactionary parliaments, why should a rapidly growing revolutionary mass party, in the midst of the post-war disillusionment and embitterment of the masses, be unable to *forge* a communist group in the worst of parliaments? It is because, in Western Europe, the backward masses of the workers and—to an even greater degree—of the small peasants are much more imbued with bourgeois-democratic and parliamentary prejudices than they were in Russia; because of that, it is *only* from within such institutions as bourgeois parliaments that Communists can (and must) wage a long and persistent struggle, undaunted by any difficulties, to expose, dispel and overcome these prejudices.

The German "Lefts" complain of bad "leaders" in their party, give way to despair, and even arrive at a ridiculous "negation" of "leaders". But in conditions in which it is often necessary to hire "leaders" underground, the *evolution* of good "leaders", reliable, tested and authoritative, is a very difficult matter; these difficulties *cannot* be successfully overcome without combining legal and illegal work, and *without testing the "leaders", among other ways*, in parliaments. Criticism—the most keen, ruthless and uncompromising criticism—should be directed, not against parliamentarianism or parliamentary activities, but against those leaders who are unable—and still more against those who are *unwilling*—to utilise parliamentary elections and the parliamentary rostrum in a revolutionary and communist manner. Only such criticism—combined, of course, with the dismissal of incapable leaders and their replacement by capable ones—will constitute useful and fruitful revolutionary work that will simultaneously train the "leaders" to be worthy of the working class and of all working people, and train the masses to be able properly to understand the political situation and the often very complicated and intricate tasks that spring from that situation.\*

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\* I have had too little opportunity to acquaint myself with "Left-wing" communism in Italy. Comrade Bordiga and his faction of

## VIII

### No Compromises?

In the quotation from the Frankfurt pamphlet, we have seen how emphatically the "Lefts" have advanced this slogan. It is sad to see people who no doubt consider themselves Marxists, and want to be Marxists, forget the fundamental truths of Marxism. This is what Engels—who, like Marx, was one of those rarest of authors whose every sentence in every one of their fundamental works contains a remarkably profound content—wrote in 1874, against the manifesto of the thirty-three Blanquist Communards:

"'We are Communists' [the Blanquist Communards wrote in their manifesto], 'because we want to attain our goal without stopping at intermediate stations, without any compromises, which only postpone the day of victory and prolong the period of slavery.'

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Abstentionist Communists (*Comunista astensionista*) are certainly wrong in advocating non-participation in parliament. But on one point, it seems to me, Comrade Bordiga is right—as far as can be judged from two issues of his paper, *Il Soviet* (Nos. 3 and 4, January 18 and February 1, 1920), from four issues of Comrade Serrati's excellent periodical, *Comunismo* (Nos. 1-4, October 1-November 30, 1919), and from separate issues of Italian bourgeois papers which I have seen. Comrade Bordiga and his group are right in attacking Turati and his partisans, who remain in a party which has recognised Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and yet continue their former pernicious and opportunist policy as members of parliament. Of course, in tolerating this, Comrade Serrati and the entire Italian Socialist Party are making a mistake which threatens to do as much harm and give rise to the same dangers as it did in Hungary, where the Hungarian Turatis sabotaged both the party and the Soviet government from within. Such a mistaken, inconsistent, or spineless attitude towards the opportunist parliamentarians gives rise to "Left-wing" communism, on the one hand, and to a *certain extent* justifies its existence, on the other. Comrade Serrati is obviously wrong when he accuses Deputy Turati of being "inconsistent" (*Comunismo* No. 3), for it is the Italian Socialist Party itself that is inconsistent in tolerating such opportunist parliamentarians as Turati and Co.

"The German Communists are Communists because, through all the intermediate stations and all compromises created, not by them but by the course of historical development, they clearly perceive and constantly pursue the final aim—the abolition of classes and the creation of a society in which there will no longer be private ownership of land or of the means of production. The thirty-three Blanquists are Communists just because they imagine that, merely because *they* want to skip the intermediate stations and compromises, the matter is settled, and if 'it begins' in the next few days—which they take for granted—and they take over power, 'communism will be introduced' the day after tomorrow. If that is not immediately possible, they are not Communists.

"What childish innocence it is to present one's own impatience as a theoretically convincing argument!" (Friedrich Engels, "Programme of the Blanquist Communards", from the German Social-Democratic newspaper *Volksstaat*, 1874, No. 73, given in the Russian translation of *Articles, 1871-1875*, Petrograd, 1919, pp. 52-53).

In the same article, Engels expresses his profound esteem for Vaillant, and speaks of the "unquestionable merit" of the latter (who, like Guesde, was one of the most prominent leaders of international socialism until their betrayal of socialism in August 1914). But Engels does not fail to give a detailed analysis of an obvious error. Of course, to very young and inexperienced revolutionaries, as well as to petty-bourgeois revolutionaries of even very respectable age and great experience, it seems extremely "dangerous", incomprehensible and wrong to "permit compromises". Many sophists (being unusually or excessively "experienced" politicians) reason exactly in the same way as the British leaders of opportunism mentioned by Comrade Lansbury: "If the Bolsheviks are permitted a certain compromise, why should we not be permitted any kind of compromise?" However, proletarians schooled in numerous strikes (to take only this manifestation of the class struggle) usually

assimilate in admirable fashion the very profound truth (philosophical, historical, political and psychological) expounded by Engels. Every proletarian has been through, strikes and has experienced "compromises" with the hated oppressors and exploiters, when the workers have had to return to work either without having achieved anything or else agreeing to only a partial satisfaction of their demands. Every proletarian—as a result of the conditions of the mass struggle and the acute intensification of class antagonisms he lives among—sees the difference between a compromise enforced by objective conditions (such as lack of strike funds, no outside support, starvation and exhaustion)—a compromise which in no way minimises the revolutionary devotion and readiness to carry on the struggle on the part of the workers who have agreed to such a compromise—and, on the other hand, a compromise by traitors who try to ascribe to objective causes their self-interest (strike-breakers also enter into "compromises"!), their cowardice, desire to toady to the capitalists, and readiness to yield to intimidation, sometimes to persuasion, sometimes to sops, and sometimes to flattery from the capitalists. (The history of the British labour movement provides a very large number of instances of such treacherous compromises by British trade union leaders, but, in one form or another, almost all workers in all countries have witnessed the same sort of thing.)

Naturally, there are individual cases of exceptional difficulty and complexity, when the greatest efforts are necessary for a proper assessment of the actual character of this or that "compromise", just as there are cases of homicide when it is by no means easy to establish whether the homicide was fully justified and even necessary (as, for example, legitimate self-defence), or due to unpardonable negligence, or even to a cunningly executed perfidious plan. Of course, in politics, where it is sometimes a matter of extremely complex relations—national and international—between classes and parties, very many cases will arise

that will be much more difficult than the question of a legitimate "compromise" in a strike or a treacherous "compromise" by a strike-breaker, treacherous leader, etc. It would be absurd to formulate a recipe or general rule ("No compromises!") to suit all cases. One must use one's own brains and be able to find one's bearings in each particular instance. It is, in fact, one of the functions of a party organisation and of party leaders worthy of the name, to acquire, through the prolonged, persistent, variegated and comprehensive efforts of all thinking representatives of a given class,\* the knowledge, experience and—in addition to knowledge and experience—the political flair necessary for the speedy and correct solution of complex political problems.

Naïve and quite inexperienced people imagine that the permissibility of compromise *in general* is sufficient to obliterate any distinction between opportunism, against which we are waging, and must wage, an unremitting struggle, and revolutionary Marxism, or communism. But if such people do not yet know that in nature and in society *all* distinctions are fluid and up to a certain point conventional, nothing can help them but lengthy training, education, enlightenment, and political and everyday experience. In the practical questions that arise in the politics of any particular or specific historical moment, it is important to single out those which display the principal type of intolerable and treacherous compromises, such as embody an opportunism that is fatal to the revolutionary class, and to exert all efforts to explain them and combat them. During the 1914-18 imperialist war between two groups of

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\* Within every class, even in the conditions prevailing in the most enlightened countries, even within the most advanced class, and even when the circumstances of the moment have aroused all its spiritual forces to an exceptional degree, there always are—and inevitably *will be* as long as classes exist, as long as a classless society has not fully consolidated itself, and has not developed on its own foundations—representatives of the class who do not think, and are incapable of thinking, for themselves. Capitalism would not be the oppressor of the masses that it actually is, if things were otherwise.

equally predatory countries, social-chauvinism was the principal and fundamental type of opportunism, i.e., support of "defence of country", which in *such* a war was really equivalent to defence of the predatory interests of one's "own" bourgeoisie. After the war, defence of the robber League of Nations, defence of direct or indirect alliances with the bourgeoisie of one's own country against the revolutionary proletariat and the "Soviet" movement, and defence of bourgeois democracy and bourgeois parliamentarianism against "Soviet power" became the principal manifestations of those intolerable and treacherous compromises, whose sum total constituted an opportunism fatal to the revolutionary proletariat and its cause.

"... All compromise with other parties ... any policy of manoeuvring and compromise must be emphatically rejected,"

the German Lefts write in the Frankfurt pamphlet.

It is surprising that, with such views, these Lefts do not emphatically condemn Bolshevism! After all, the German Lefts cannot but know that the entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is *full* of instances of changes of tack, conciliatory tactics and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties!

To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, protracted and complex than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states, and to renounce in advance any change of tack, or any utilisation of a conflict of interests (even if temporary) among one's enemies, or any conciliation or compromise with possible allies (even if they are temporary, unstable, vacillating or conditional allies)—is that not ridiculous in the extreme? Is it not like making a difficult ascent of an unexplored and hitherto inaccessible mountain and refusing in advance ever to move in zigzags, ever to retrace one's steps, or ever to abandon a course once selected, and to try others? And yet people so immature and inexperienced (if youth were the explanation, it would not be so



bad; young people are preordained to talk such nonsense for a certain period) have met with support—whether direct or indirect, open or covert, whole or partial, it does not matter—from some members of the Communist Party of Holland.

After the first socialist revolution of the proletariat, and the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in some country, the proletariat of that country remains *for a long time weaker* than the bourgeoisie, simply because of the latter's extensive international links, and also because of the spontaneous and continuous restoration and regeneration of capitalism and the bourgeoisie by the small commodity producers of the country which has overthrown the bourgeoisie. The more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive, skilful and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest, rift between the enemies, any conflict of interests among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this reveal a failure to understand even the smallest grain of Marxism, of modern scientific socialism *in general*. Those who have not proved *in practice*, over a fairly considerable period of time and in fairly varied political situations, their ability to apply this truth in practice have not yet learned to help the revolutionary class in its struggle to emancipate all toiling humanity from the exploiters. And this applies equally to the period *before* and *after* the proletariat has won political power.

Our theory is not a dogma, but a *guide to action*, said Marx and Engels.\* The greatest blunder, the greatest crime, committed by such "out-and-out" Marxists as Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc., is that they have not understood this

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\* See Engels' letter to F. A. Sorge of November 29, 1886.—Ed.

and have been unable to apply it at crucial moments of the proletarian revolution. "Political activity is not like the pavement of Nevsky Prospekt" (the well-kept, broad and level pavement of the perfectly straight principal thoroughfare of St. Petersburg), N. G. Chernyshevsky, the great Russian socialist of the pre-Marxist period, used to say.\* Since Chernyshevsky's time, disregard or forgetfulness of this truth has cost Russian revolutionaries countless sacrifices. We must strive at all costs to *prevent* the Left Communists and West-European and American revolutionaries that are devoted to the working class from paying *as dearly* as the backward Russians did to learn this truth.

Prior to the downfall of tsarism, the Russian revolutionary Social-Democrats made repeated use of the services of the bourgeois liberals, i.e., they concluded numerous practical compromises with the latter. In 1901-02, even prior to the appearance of Bolshevism, the old editorial board of *Iskra* (consisting of Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Martov, Potresov and myself) concluded (not for long, it is true) a formal political alliance with Struve, the political leader of bourgeois liberalism, while at the same time being able to wage an unrelenting and most merciless ideological and political struggle against bourgeois liberalism and against the slightest manifestations of its influence in the working-class movement. The Bolsheviks have always adhered to this policy. Since 1905 they have systematically advocated an alliance between the working class and the peasantry, against the liberal bourgeoisie and tsarism, never, however, refusing to support the bourgeoisie against tsarism (for instance, during second rounds of elections, or during second ballots) and never ceasing their relentless ideological and political struggle against the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the

\* In his review of *Politico-Economical Letters to the US President* by G. C. Carey, an American economist, Chernyshevsky wrote: "The course of history is not like the pavement of Nevsky Prospekt—it lies through fields, dusty and dirty, through marshes and thickets. Those who are afraid to be marred with dust and to soil their boots should not engage in social activity."—*Ed.*

bourgeois-revolutionary peasant party, exposing them as petty-bourgeois democrats who have falsely described themselves as socialists. During the Duma elections of 1907, the Bolsheviks entered briefly into a formal political bloc with the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Between 1903 and 1912, there were periods of several years in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks in a single Social-Democratic Party, but we *never stopped* our ideological and political struggle against them as opportunists and vehicles of bourgeois influence on the proletariat. During the war, we concluded certain compromises with the Kautskyites, with the Left Mensheviks (Martov), and with a section of the Socialist-Revolutionaries (Chernov and Natanson); we were together with them at Zimmerwald and Kienthal,\* and issued joint manifestos. However, we never ceased and never relaxed our ideological and political struggle against the Kautskyites, Martov and Chernov (when Natanson died in 1919, a "Revolutionary-Communist" Narodnik, he was very close to and almost in agreement with us). At the very moment of the October Revolution, we entered into an informal but very important (and very successful) political bloc with the petty-bourgeois peasantry by adopting the *Socialist-Revolutionary agrarian programme in its entirety*, without a single alteration—i.e., we effected an undeniable compromise in order to prove to the peasants that we wanted, not to "steam-roller" them but to reach agreement with them. At the same time we proposed (and soon after effected) a formal political bloc, including participation in the government, with the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, who dissolved this bloc after the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and then, in July 1918, went to the length of armed rebellion, and subsequently of an armed struggle, against us.

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\* The reference is to the International Socialist conferences in Zimmerwald and Kienthal (Switzerland) during the First World War. The Zimmerwald Conference was held on September 5-8, 1915 and the Kienthal Conference from April 24 to 30, 1916.—Ed.

It is therefore understandable why the attacks made by the German Lefts against the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany for entertaining the idea of a bloc with the Independents (the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany—the Kautskyites) are absolutely inane, in our opinion, and clear proof that the “Lefts” are in the *wrong*. In Russia, too, there were Right Mensheviks (participants in the Kerensky government), who corresponded to the German Scheidemanns, and Left Mensheviks (Martov), corresponding to the German Kautskyites and standing in opposition to the Right Mensheviks. A gradual shift of the worker masses from the Mensheviks over to the Bolsheviks was to be clearly seen in 1917. At the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets, held in June 1917, we had only 13 per cent of the votes; the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks had a majority. At the Second Congress of Soviets (October 25, 1917, old style) we had 51 per cent of the votes. Why is it that in Germany the *same* and absolutely *identical* shift of the workers from Right to Left did not immediately strengthen the Communists, but first strengthened the midway Independent Party, although the latter never had independent political ideas or an independent policy, but merely wavered between the Scheidemanns and the Communists?

One of the evident reasons was the *erroneous* tactics of the German Communists, who must fearlessly and honestly admit this error and learn to rectify it. The error consisted in the denial of the need to take part in the reactionary bourgeois parliaments and in the reactionary trade unions; the error consisted in numerous manifestations of that “Left-wing” infantile disorder which has now come to the surface and will consequently be cured the more thoroughly, the more rapidly and with greater advantage to the organism.

The German Independent Social-Democratic Party is obviously not a homogeneous body. Alongside the old opportunist leaders (Kautsky, Hilferding and apparently, to a considerable extent, Crispian, Ledebour and others)—these

have revealed their inability to understand the significance of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and their inability to lead the proletariat's revolutionary struggle—there has emerged in this party a Left and proletarian wing, which is growing most rapidly. Hundreds of thousands of members of this party (which has, I think, a membership of some three-quarters of a million) are proletarians who are abandoning Scheidemann and are rapidly going over to communism. This proletarian wing has already proposed—at the Leipzig Congress of the Independents (1919)—immediate and unconditional affiliation to the Third International. To fear a "compromise" with this wing of the party is positively ridiculous. On the contrary, it is the *duty* of Communists to seek *and find* a suitable form of compromise with them, a compromise which, on the one hand, will facilitate and accelerate the necessary complete fusion with this wing and, on the other, will in no way hamper the Communists in their ideological and political struggle against the opportunist Right wing of the Independents. It will probably be no easy matter to devise a suitable form of compromise—but only a charlatan could promise the German workers and the German Communists an "easy" road to victory.

Capitalism would not be capitalism if the proletariat *pur sang* were not surrounded by a large number of exceedingly motley types intermediate between the proletarian and the semi-proletarian (who earns his livelihood in part by the sale of his labour-power), between the semi-proletarian and the small peasant (and petty artisan, handicraft worker and small master in general), between the small peasant and the middle peasant, and so on, and if the proletariat itself were not divided into more developed and less developed strata, if it were not divided according to territorial origin, trade, sometimes according to religion, and so on. From all this follows the necessity, the absolute necessity for the Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, its class-conscious section, to resort to changes of tack,

to conciliation and compromises with the various groups of proletarians, with the various parties of the workers and small masters. It is entirely a matter of *knowing how* to apply these tactics in order to *raise*—not lower—the *general* level of proletarian class-consciousness, revolutionary spirit, and ability to fight and win. Incidentally, it should be noted that the Bolsheviks' victory over the Mensheviks called for the application of tactics of changes of tack, conciliation and compromises, not only before *but also after* the October Revolution of 1917, but the changes of tack and compromises were, of course, such as assisted, boosted and consolidated the Bolsheviks at the expense of the Mensheviks. The petty-bourgeois democrats (including the Mensheviks) inevitably vacillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between bourgeois democracy and the Soviet system, between reformism and revolutionism, between love for the workers and fear of the proletarian dictatorship, etc. The Communists' proper tactics should consist in *utilising* these vacillations, not ignoring them; utilising them calls for concessions to elements that are turning towards the proletariat—whenever and in the measure that they turn towards the proletariat—in addition to fighting those who turn towards the bourgeoisie. As a result of the application of the correct tactics, Menshevism began to disintegrate, and has been disintegrating more and more in our country; the stubbornly opportunist leaders are being isolated, and the best of the workers and the best elements among the petty-bourgeois democrats are being brought into our camp. This is a lengthy process, and the hasty “decision”—“No compromises, no manoeuvres”—can only prejudice the strengthening of the revolutionary proletariat's influence and the enlargement of its forces.

Lastly, one of the undoubted errors of the German “Lefts” lies in their downright refusal to recognise the Treaty of Versailles. The more “weightily” and “pompously”, the more “*emphatically*” and peremptorily this viewpoint is formulated (by K. Horner, for instance), the less sense it seems to

make. It is not enough, under the present conditions of the international proletarian revolution, to repudiate the preposterous absurdities of "National Bolshevism" (Laufenberg and others), which has gone to the length of advocating a bloc with the German bourgeoisie for a war against the Entente. One must realise that it is utterly false tactics to refuse to admit that a Soviet Germany (if a German Soviet republic were soon to arise) would have to recognise the Treaty of Versailles for a time, and to submit to it. From this it does not follow that the Independents—at a time when the Scheidemanns were in the government, when the Soviet government in Hungary had not yet been overthrown, and when it was still possible that a Soviet revolution in Vienna would support Soviet Hungary—were right, *under the circumstances*, in putting forward the demand that the Treaty of Versailles should be signed. At that time the Independents tacked and manoeuvred very clumsily, for they more or less accepted responsibility for the Scheidemann traitors, and more or less backslid from advocacy of a ruthless (and most calmly conducted) class war against the Scheidemanns, to advocacy of a "classless" or "above-class" standpoint.

In the present situation, however, the German Communists should obviously not deprive themselves of freedom of action by giving a positive and categorical promise to repudiate the Treaty of Versailles in the event of communism's victory. That would be absurd. They should say: the Scheidemanns and the Kautskyites have committed a number of acts of treachery hindering (and in part quite ruining) the chances of an alliance with Soviet Russia and Soviet Hungary. We Communists will do all we can to *facilitate* and *pave the way* for such an alliance. However, we are in no way obligated to repudiate the Treaty of Versailles, come what may, or to do so at once. The possibility of its successful repudiation will depend, not only on the German, but also on the international successes of the Soviet movement. The Scheidemanns and the Kautskyites have hampered this movement; we are helping it. That is the gist of the matter; therein lies

the fundamental difference. And if our class enemies, the exploiters and their Scheidemann and Kautskyite lackeys, have missed many an opportunity of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet movement, of strengthening both the German and the international Soviet revolution, the blame lies with them. The Soviet revolution in Germany will strengthen the international Soviet movement, which is the strongest bulwark (and the only reliable, invincible and world-wide bulwark) against the Treaty of Versailles and against international imperialism in general. To give absolute, categorical and immediate precedence to liberation from the Treaty of Versailles and to give it *precedence over the question* of liberating other countries oppressed by imperialism, from the yoke of imperialism, is philistine nationalism (worthy of the Kautskys, the Hilferdings, the Otto Bauers and Co.), not revolutionary internationalism. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie in any of the large European countries, including Germany, would be such a gain for the international revolution that, for its sake, one can, and if necessary should, tolerate a *more prolonged existence of the Treaty of Versailles*. If Russia, standing alone, could endure the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk for several months, to the advantage of the revolution, there is nothing impossible in a Soviet Germany, allied with Soviet Russia, enduring the existence of the Treaty of Versailles for a longer period, to the advantage of the revolution.

The imperialists of France, Britain, etc., are trying to provoke and ensnare the German Communists: "Say that you will not sign the Treaty of Versailles!" they urge. Like babes, the Left Communists fall into the trap laid for them, instead of skilfully manoeuvring against the crafty and, *at present*, stronger enemy, and instead of telling him, "We shall sign the Treaty of Versailles now." It is folly, not revolutionism, to deprive ourselves in advance of any freedom of action, openly to inform an enemy who is at present better armed than we are, whether we shall fight him, and when. To accept battle at a time when it is obviously



advantageous to the enemy, but not to us, is criminal; political leaders of the revolutionary class are absolutely useless if they are incapable of "changing tack, or offering conciliation and compromise" in order to take evasive action in a patently disadvantageous battle.

## X

### Several Conclusions

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 revealed a highly original turn in world history: in one of the most backward capitalist countries, the strike movement attained a scope and power unprecedented anywhere in the world. In the *first month* of 1905 *alone*, the number of strikers was ten times the *annual* average for the previous decade (1895-1904); from January to October 1905, strikes grew all the time and reached enormous proportions. Under the influence of a number of unique historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show the world, not only the growth, by leaps and bounds, of the independent activity of the oppressed masses in time of revolution (this had occurred in all great revolutions), but also that the significance of the proletariat is infinitely greater than its proportion in the total population; it showed a combination of the economic strike and the political strike, with the latter developing into an armed uprising, and the birth of the Soviets, a new form of mass struggle and mass organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism.

The revolutions of February and October 1917 led to the all-round development of the Soviets on a nation-wide scale and to their victory in the proletarian socialist revolution. In less than two years, the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this form of struggle and organisation to the world working-class movement and the historical mission of the Soviets as the grave-digger, heir and successor of bourgeois parliamentarianism and of bourgeois democracy in general, all became clear.

But that is not all. The history of the working-class movement now shows that, in all countries, it is about to go through (and is already going through) a struggle waged by communism—emergent, gaining strength and advancing towards victory—against, primarily, Menshevism, i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism (the *home brand* in each particular country), and then as a complement, so to say, Left-wing communism. The former struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without any exception, as a duel between the Second International (already virtually dead) and the Third International. The latter struggle is to be seen in Germany, Great Britain, Italy, America (at any rate, a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and of the anarcho-syndicalist trends uphold the errors of Left-wing communism alongside of an almost universal and almost unreserved acceptance of the Soviet system), and in France (the attitude of a section of the former syndicalists towards the political party and parliamentarism, also alongside of the acceptance of the Soviet system); in other words, the struggle is undoubtedly being waged, not only on an international, but even on a world-wide scale.

But while the working-class movement is everywhere going through what is actually the same kind of preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, it is achieving that development in its *own way* in each country. The big and advanced capitalist countries are travelling this road *far more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, to which history granted fifteen years to prepare itself for victory, as an organised political trend. In the brief space of a year, the Third International has already scored a decisive victory; it has defeated the yellow, social-chauvinist Second International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International; seemed stable and powerful, and enjoyed every possible support—direct and indirect, material (Cabinet posts, passports, the press) and ideological—from the world bourgeoisie.

It is now essential that Communists of every country

should quite consciously take into account both the fundamental objectives of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism, and the *concrete features* which this struggle assumes and must inevitably assume in each country, in conformity with the specific character of its economics, politics, culture, and national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth. Dissatisfaction with the Second International is felt everywhere and is spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability or incapacity to create a really centralised and really leading centre capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. It should be clearly realised that such a leading centre can never be built up on stereotyped, mechanically equated, and identical tactical rules of struggle. As long as national and state distinctions exist among peoples and countries—and these will continue to exist for a very long time to come, even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world-wide scale—the unity of the international tactics of the communist working-class movement in all countries demands, not the elimination of variety or the suppression of national distinctions (which is a pipe dream at present), but the application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat), which will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state distinctions. To seek out, investigate, predict, and grasp that which is nationally specific and nationally distinctive, in the *concrete manner* in which each country should tackle a *single* international task: victory over opportunism and Left doctrinairism within the working-class movement; the overthrow of the bourgeoisie; the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—such is the basic task in the historical period that all the advanced countries (and not they alone) are going through. The chief thing—though, of course, far from ev-

everything—the chief thing, has already been achieved: the vanguard of the working class has been won over, has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government and against parliamentarianism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat and against bourgeois democracy. All efforts and all attention should now be concentrated on the *next* step, which may seem—and from a certain viewpoint actually is—less fundamental, but, on the other hand, is actually closer to a practical accomplishment of the task. That step is: the search after forms of the *transition* or the *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without this, not even the first step towards victory can be made. But that is still quite a long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with a vanguard alone. To throw only the vanguard into the decisive battle, before the entire class, the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support for the vanguard, or at least of sympathetic neutrality towards it and of precluded support for the enemy, would be, not merely foolish but criminal. Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough for an entire class, the broad masses of the working people, those oppressed by capital, to take up such a stand. For that, the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, which has been confirmed with compelling force and vividness, not only in Russia but in Germany as well. To turn resolutely towards communism, it was necessary, not only for the ignorant and often illiterate masses of Russia, but also for the literate and well-educated masses of Germany, to realise from their own bitter experience the absolute impotence and spinelessness, the absolute helplessness and servility to the bourgeoisie, and the utter vileness of the government of the paladins of the Second International; they had to realise that a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia; Kapp and Co. in Germany) is inevitably the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The immediate objective of the class-conscious vanguard of the international working-class movement, i.e., the Communist parties, groups and trends, is to be able to *lead* the broad masses (who are still, for the most part, apathetic, inert, dormant and convention-ridden) to their new position, or, rather, to be able to lead, *not only* their own party but also these masses in their advance and transition to the new position. While the first historical objective (that of winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to the side of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not have been reached without a complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social-chauvinism, the second and immediate objective, which consists in being able to lead the *masses* to a new position ensuring the victory of the vanguard in the revolution, cannot be reached without the liquidation of Left doctrinairism, and without a full elimination of its errors.

As long as it was (and inasmuch as it still is) a question of winning the proletariat's vanguard over to the side of communism, priority went and still goes to propaganda work; even propaganda circles, with all their parochial limitations, are useful under these conditions, and produce good results. But when it is a question of practical action by the masses, of the disposition, if one may so put it, of vast armies, of the alignment of *all* the class forces in a given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propagandist methods alone, the mere repetition of the truths of "pure" communism, are of no avail. In these circumstances, one must not count in thousands, like the propagandist belonging to a small group that has not yet given leadership to the masses; in these circumstances one must count in millions and tens of millions. In these circumstances, we must ask ourselves, not only whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—positively of all the classes in a given society, without exception—are arrayed in such a way that the decisive battle is at hand—in such a way that:

(1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently weakened themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength; (2) all the vacillating and unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois democrats, as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves through their practical bankruptcy, and (3) among the proletariat, a mass sentiment favouring the most determined, bold and dedicated revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie has emerged and begun to grow vigorously. Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and summarised above, and if we have chosen the right moment, our victory is assured.

The differences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national distinctions, these political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand, and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure (i.e., abstract) communism, i.e., communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical political action by the masses. However, from the standpoint of this practical action by the masses, these differences are most important. To take due account of these differences, and to determine the moment when the inevitable conflicts between these “friends”, which weaken and enfeeble *all the “friends” taken together*, will have come to a head—that is the concern, the task, of a Communist who wants to be, not merely a class-conscious and convinced propagandist of ideas, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution. It is necessary to link the strictest devotion to the ideas of communism with the ability to effect all the necessary practical compromises, tacks, conciliatory manoeuvres, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to speed up the achievement and then loss of political power by the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to name individual representatives

of petty-bourgeois democracy who call themselves socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in the spirit of our ideas, in the direction of communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and complete disintegration among the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Constitutional-Democrats, the monarchists; the Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie and the Kappists, etc.); to select the proper moment when the discord among these "pillars of sacrosanct private property" is at its height, so that, through a decisive offensive, the proletariat will defeat them all and capture political power.

History as a whole, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more multiform, more lively and ingenious than is imagined by even the best parties, the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes. This can readily be understood, because even the finest of vanguards express the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of thousands, whereas at moments of great upsurge and the exertion of all human capacities, revolutions are made by the class-consciousness, will, passion and imagination of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes. Two very important practical conclusions follow from this: first, that in order to accomplish its task the revolutionary class must be able to master *all* forms or aspects of social activity without exception (completing after the capture of political power—sometimes at great risk and with very great danger—what it did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary class must be prepared for the most rapid and brusque replacement of one form by another.

One will readily agree that any army which does not train to use all the weapons, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses, or may possess, is behaving in an unwise or even criminal manner. This applies to poli-

tics even more than it does to the art of war. In politics it is even harder to know in advance which methods of struggle will be applicable and to our advantage in certain future conditions. Unless we learn to apply all the methods of struggle, we may suffer grave and sometimes even decisive defeat, if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes bring to the forefront a form of activity in which we are especially weak. If, however, we learn to use all the methods of struggle, victory will be certain, because we represent the interests of the really foremost and really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to make use of weapons that are most dangerous to the enemy, weapons that deal the swiftest mortal blows. Inexperienced revolutionaries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because, in this field, the bourgeoisie has most frequently deceived and duped the workers (particularly in "peaceful" and non-revolutionary times), while illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. That, however, is wrong. The truth is that those parties and leaders are opportunists and traitors to the working class that are unable or unwilling (do not say, "I can't"; say, "I shan't") to use illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as those which prevailed, for example, during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries most brazenly and brutally deceived the workers, and smothered the truth about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are incapable of combining illegal forms of struggle with *every* form of legal struggle are poor revolutionaries indeed. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out and is in spate, when all people are joining the revolution just because they are carried away, because it is the vogue, and sometimes even from careerist motives. After its victory, the proletariat has to make most strenuous efforts, even the most painful, so as to "liberate" itself from such pseudo-revolutionaries. It is far more difficult—and far more precious—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolution-



ary struggle *do not yet exist*, to be able to champion the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organisation) in non-revolutionary bodies, and quite often in downright reactionary bodies, in a non-revolutionary situation, among the masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action. To be able to seek, find and correctly determine the specific path or the particular turn of events that will *lead* the masses to the real, decisive and final revolutionary struggle—such is the main objective of communism in Western Europe and America today.

Britain is an example. We cannot tell—no one can tell in advance—how soon a real proletarian revolution will flare up there, and *what immediate cause* will most serve to rouse, kindle, and impel into the struggle the very wide masses, who are still dormant. Hence, it is our duty to carry on all our preparatory work in such a way as to be "well shod on all four feet" (as the late Plekhanov, when he was a Marxist and revolutionary, was fond of saying). It is possible that the breach will be forced, the ice broken, by a parliamentary crisis, or by a crisis arising from colonial and imperialist contradictions, which are hopelessly entangled and are becoming increasingly painful and acute, or perhaps by some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain (no Communist has any doubt on that score; for all of us this is a foregone conclusion): what we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will bring into motion the now dormant proletarian masses, and lead them right up to revolution. Let us not forget that in the French bourgeois republic, for example, in a situation which, from both the international and the national viewpoints, was a hundred times less revolutionary than it is today, such an "unexpected" and "petty" cause as one of the many thousands of fraudulent machinations of the reactionary military caste (the Dreyfus case) was enough to bring the people to the brink of civil war!

In Great Britain the Communists should constantly, unrelentingly and unswervingly utilise parliamentary elections and all the vicissitudes of the Irish, colonial and world-imperialist policy of the British Government, and all other fields, spheres and aspects of public life, and work in all of them in a new way, in a communist way, in the spirit of the Third, not the Second, International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the "Russian" "Bolshevik" methods of participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle; I can, however, assure foreign Communists that they were quite unlike the usual West-European parliamentary campaigns. From this the conclusion is often drawn: "Well, that was in Russia; in our country parliamentarianism is different." This is a false conclusion. Communists, adherents of the Third International in all countries, exist for the purpose of *changing*—all along the line, in all spheres of life—the old socialist, trade unionist, syndicalist, and parliamentary type of work into a *new* type of work, the communist. In Russia, too, there was always an abundance of opportunism, purely bourgeois sharp practices and capitalist rigging in the elections. In Western Europe and in America, the Communists must learn to create a new, uncustomary, non-opportunist, and non-careerist parliamentarianism; the Communist parties must issue their slogans; true proletarians, with the help of the unorganised and downtrodden poor, should distribute leaflets, canvass workers' houses and cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are many times fewer remote villages in Europe than in Russia, and in Britain the number is very small); they should go into the public houses, penetrate into unions, societies and chance gatherings of the common people, and speak to the people, not in learned (or very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere try to get people to think, and draw the masses into the struggle, to take the bourgeoisie at its word and utilise the machinery it has set up, the elections it has appointed,

and the appeals it has made to the people; they should try to explain to the people what Bolshevism is, in a way that was never possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (exclusive, of course, of times of big strikes, when in Russia a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in Western Europe and extremely difficult in America, but it can and must be done, for the objectives of communism cannot be achieved without effort. We must work to accomplish *practical* tasks, ever more varied and ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, *winning* branch after branch, and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie*.

In Great Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organisation among the armed forces and among the oppressed and underprivileged nationalities in their "*own*" state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be tackled in a new fashion (one that is not socialist, but communist; not reformist, but revolutionary). That is because, in the era of imperialism in general and especially today after a war that was a sore trial to the peoples and has quickly opened their eyes to the truth (i.e., the fact that tens of millions were killed and maimed for the sole purpose of deciding whether the British or the German robbers should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are heavily charged with inflammable material and are creating numerous causes of conflicts, crises and an intensification of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying about in all countries as a result of the world economic and political crisis—will kindle the conflagration, in the sense of raising up the masses; we must, therefore, with our new and communist principles, set to work to stir up all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be able to cope with our tasks, shall not be comprehensively prepared, shall not be in possession of all the weapons and shall not prepare ourselves either to gain

victory over the bourgeoisie (which arranged all aspects of social life—and has now disarranged them—in its bourgeois fashion), or to bring about the impending communist reorganisation of every sphere of life, following that victory.

Since the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, expected neither by the bourgeoisie nor the philistines, the entire world has become different, and the bourgeoisie everywhere has become different too. It is terrified of "Bolshevism", exasperated by it almost to the point of frenzy, and for that very reason it is, on the one hand, precipitating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating on the forcible suppression of Bolshevism, thereby weakening its own position in a number of other fields. In their tactics the Communists in all the advanced countries must take both these circumstances into account.

When the Russian Cadets and Kerensky began furiously to hound the Bolsheviks—especially since April 1917, and more particularly in June and July 1917—they overdid things. Millions of copies of bourgeois papers, clamouring in every key against the Bolsheviks, helped the masses to make an appraisal of Bolshevism; apart from the newspapers, all public life was full of discussions about Bolshevism, as a result of the bourgeoisie's "zeal". Today the millionaires of all countries are behaving on an international scale in a way that deserves our heartiest thanks. They are hounding Bolshevism with the same zeal as Kerensky and Co. did; they, too, are overdoing things and *helping* us just as Kerensky did. When the French bourgeoisie makes Bolshevism the central issue in the elections, and accuses the comparatively moderate or vacillating socialists of being Bolsheviks; when the American bourgeoisie, which has completely lost its head, seizes thousands and thousands of people on suspicion of Bolshevism, creates an atmosphere of panic, and broadcasts stories of Bolshevik plots; when, despite all its wisdom and experience, the British bourgeois-

sic—the most “solid” in the world—makes incredible blunders, founds richly endowed “anti-Bolshevik societies”, creates a special literature on Bolshevism, and recruits an extra number of scientists, agitators and clergymen to combat it, we must salute and thank the capitalists. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the essence and significance of Bolshevism, and they cannot do otherwise, for they have *already* failed to ignore Bolshevism and stifle it.

But at the same time, the bourgeoisie sees practically only one aspect of Bolshevism—insurrection, violence, and terror; it therefore strives to prepare itself for resistance and opposition primarily in *this* field. It is possible that, in certain instances, in certain countries, and for certain brief periods, it will succeed in this. We must reckon with such an eventuality, and we have absolutely nothing to fear if it does succeed. Communism is emerging in positively every sphere of public life; its beginnings are to be seen literally on all sides. The “contagion” (to use the favourite metaphor of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois police, the one mostly to their liking) has very thoroughly penetrated the organism and has completely permeated it. If special efforts are made to block one of the channels, the “contagion” will find another one, sometimes very unexpectedly. Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (as in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday’s and tomorrow’s Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie is acting as all historically doomed classes have done. Communists should know that, in any case, the future belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle, with the coolest and most sober appraisal of the frenzied ravings of the bourgeoisie. The Russian revolution was cruelly defeated in 1905; the Russian Bolsheviks were defeated in July 1917; over 15,000 German Communists

were killed as a result of the wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske, who were working hand in glove with the bourgeoisie and the monarchist generals; White terror is raging in Finland and Hungary. But in all cases and in all countries, communism is becoming steeled and is growing; its roots are so deep that persecution does not weaken or debilitate it, but only strengthens it. Only one thing is lacking to enable us to march forward more confidently and firmly to victory, namely, the universal and thorough awareness of all Communists in all countries, of the necessity to display the utmost *flexibility* in their tactics. The communist movement, which is developing magnificently, now lacks, especially in the advanced countries, this awareness and the ability to apply it in practice.

That which happened to such leaders of the Second International, such highly erudite Marxists devoted to socialism as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and others, could (and should) provide a useful lesson. They fully appreciated the need for flexible tactics; they themselves learned Marxist dialectic and taught it to others (and much of what they have done in this field will always remain a valuable contribution to socialist literature); however, *in the application* of this dialectic they committed such an error, or proved to be so *undialectical* in practice, so incapable of taking into account the rapid change of forms and the rapid acquisition of new content by the old forms, that their fate is not much more enviable than that of Hyndman, Guesde and Plekhanov. The principal reason for their bankruptcy was that they were hypnotised by a definite form of growth of the working-class movement and socialism, forgot all about the one-sidedness of that form, were afraid to see the break-up which objective conditions made inevitable, and continued to repeat simple and, at first glance, incontestable axioms that had been learned by rote, like: "three is more than two". But politics is more like algebra than arithmetic, and still more like higher than elementary mathematics. In reality, all the old

forms of the socialist movement have acquired a new content, and, consequently, a new symbol, the "minus" sign, has appeared in front of all the figures; our wiseacres, however, have stubbornly continued (and still continue) to persuade themselves and others that "minus three" is more than "minus two".

We must see to it that Communists do not make a similar mistake, only in the opposite sense, or rather, we must see to it that a *similar mistake*, only made in the opposite sense by the "Left" Communists, is corrected as soon as possible and eliminated as rapidly and painlessly as possible. It is not only Right doctrinairism that is erroneous; Left doctrinairism is erroneous too. Of course, the mistake of Left doctrinairism in communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than that of Right doctrinairism (i.e., social-chauvinism and Kautskyism); but, after all, that is only due to the fact that Left communism is a very young trend, is only just coming into being. It is only for this reason that, under certain conditions, the disease can be easily eradicated, and we must set to work with the utmost energy to eradicate it.

The old forms burst asunder, for it turned out that their new content—anti-proletarian and reactionary—had attained an inordinate development. From the standpoint of the development of international communism, our work today has such a durable and powerful content (for Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) that it can *and must* manifest itself in any form, both new and old; it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new, but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of making all and every form—new and old—a weapon for the complete and irrevocable victory of communism.

The Communists must exert every effort to direct the working-class movement and social development in general along the straightest and shortest road to the victory of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world-

wide scale. That is an incontestable truth. But it is enough to take one little step farther—a step that might seem to be in the same direction—and truth turns into error. We have only to say, as the German and British Left Communists do, that we recognise only one road, only the direct road, and that we will not permit tacking, conciliatory manoeuvres, or compromising—and it will be a mistake which may cause, and in part has already caused and is causing, very grave prejudice to communism. Right doctrinairism persisted in recognising only the old forms, and became utterly bankrupt, for it did not notice the new content. Left doctrinairism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms, failing to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how, with the maximum rapidity, to supplement one form with another, to substitute one for another, and to adapt our tactics to any such change that does not come from our class or from our efforts.

World revolution has been so powerfully stimulated and accelerated by the horrors, vileness and abominations of the world imperialist war and by the hopelessness of the situation created by it, this revolution is developing in scope and depth with such splendid rapidity, with such a wonderful variety of changing forms, with such an instructive practical refutation of all doctrinairism, that there is every reason to hope for a rapid and complete recovery of the international communist movement from the infantile disorder of "Left-wing" communism.

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## **A Contribution to the History of the Question of the Dictatorship**

### *A Note*

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is the fundamental question of the modern working-class movement in all capitalist countries without exception. To elucidate this question fully, a knowledge of its history is required. On an international scale, the history of the doctrine of revolutionary dictatorship in general, and of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular, coincides with the history of revolutionary socialism, and especially with the history of Marxism. Moreover—and this, of course, is the most important thing of all—the history of all revolutions by the oppressed and exploited classes, against the exploiters, provides the basic material and source of our knowledge on the question of dictatorship. Whoever has failed to understand that dictatorship is essential to the victory of any revolutionary class has no understanding of the history of revolutions, or else does not want to know anything in this field.

With reference to Russia, special importance attaches, as far as theory is concerned, to the Programme of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party as drafted in 1902-03 by the editorial board of *Zarya* and *Iskra*, or, more exactly, drafted by G. Plekhanov, and edited, amended and endorsed by that editorial board. In this Programme, the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat is stated in clear and definite terms, and, moreover, is linked up with the struggle against Bernstein, against opportunism. Most important

of all, however, is of course the experience of revolution, i.e., in the case of Russia, the experience of the year 1905.

The last three months of that year—October, November and December—were a period of a remarkably vigorous and broad mass revolutionary struggle, a period that saw a combination of the two most powerful methods of that struggle: the mass political strike and an armed uprising. (Let us note parenthetically that as far back as *May* 1905 the Bolshevik congress, the “Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party”, declared that “the task of organising the proletariat for direct struggle against the autocracy by means of the armed uprising” was “one of the major and most urgent tasks of the Party”, and instructed all Party organisations to “explain the role of mass political strikes, which may be of great importance at the beginning and during the progress of the uprising”.)

For the first time in world history, the revolutionary struggle attained such a high stage of development and such an impetus that an armed uprising was combined with that specifically proletarian weapon—the mass strike. This experience is clearly of world significance to *all* proletarian revolutions. It was studied by the Bolsheviks with the greatest attention and diligence in both its political and its economic aspects. I shall mention an analysis of the month-by-month statistics of economic and political strikes in 1905, of the relations between them, and the level of development achieved by the strike struggle for the first time in world history. This analysis was published by me in 1910 and 1911 in the *Prosveshcheniye* journal, a summary of it being given in Bolshevik periodicals brought out abroad at the time.

The mass strikes and the armed uprisings raised, as a matter of course, the question of the revolutionary power and dictatorship, for these forms of struggle inevitably led—initially on a local scale—to the ejection of the old ruling authorities, to the seizure of power by the proletariat and the other revolutionary classes, to the expulsion of the landowners, sometimes to the seizure of factories, and so on and

so forth. The revolutionary mass struggle of the time gave rise to organisations previously unknown in world history, such as the *Soviets of Workers' Deputies*, followed by the *Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies*, *Peasants' Committees*, and the like. Thus the fundamental questions (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) that are now engaging the minds of class-conscious workers all over the world were posed in a practical form at the end of 1905. While such outstanding representatives of the revolutionary proletariat and of unfalsified Marxism as Rosa Luxemburg, immediately realised the significance of this practical experience and made a critical analysis of it at meetings and in the press, the vast majority of the official representatives of the official Social-Democratic and socialist parties—including both the reformists and people of the type of the future "Kautskyites", "Longuetists", the followers of Hillquit in America, etc.—proved absolutely incapable of grasping the significance of this experience and of performing their duty as *revolutionaries*, i.e., of setting to work to study and propagate the lessons of this experience.

In Russia, immediately after the defeat of the armed uprising of December 1905, both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks set to work to sum up this experience. This work was especially expedited by what was called the Unity Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party held in Stockholm in April 1906, where both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were represented, and formally united. The most energetic preparations for this Congress were made by both these groups. Early in 1906, prior to the Congress, both groups published drafts of their resolutions on all the most important questions. These draft resolutions—reprinted in my pamphlet, *Report on the Unity Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (A Letter to the St. Petersburg Workers)*, Moscow, 1906 (110 pages, nearly half of which are taken up with the draft resolutions of both groups and with the resolutions finally adopted by the Congress)—provide the most important material for a study of the question as it stood at the time.

By that time, the disputes as to the significance of the Soviets were already linked up with the question of dictatorship. The Bolsheviks had raised the question of the dictatorship even *prior to* the revolution of October 1905 (see my pamphlet *Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution*, Geneva, July 1905; reprinted in a volume of collected articles entitled *Twelve Years*). The Mensheviks took a negative stand with regard to the "dictatorship" slogan; the Bolsheviks emphasised that the Soviets of Workers' Deputies were "*actually an embryo of a new revolutionary power*", as was literally said in the draft of the Bolshevik resolution (p. 92 of my *Report*). The Mensheviks acknowledged the importance of the Soviets; they were in favour of "helping to organise" them, etc., but they did not regard them as embryos of revolutionary power, did not in general say anything about a "new revolutionary power" of this or some similar type, and flatly rejected the slogan of dictatorship. It will easily be seen that this attitude to the question already contained the seeds of *all* the present disagreements with the Mensheviks. It will also be easily seen that, in their attitude to this question, the Mensheviks (both Russian and non-Russian, such as the Kautskyites, Longuetists and the like) have been behaving like reformists or opportunists, who recognise the proletarian revolution in word, but *in deed reject what is most essential and fundamental in the concept of "revolution"*.

Even before the revolution of 1905, I analysed, in the aforementioned pamphlet, *Two Tactics*, the arguments of the Mensheviks, who accused me of having "imperceptibly substituted 'dictatorship' for 'revolution'" (*Twelve Years*, p. 459). I showed in detail that, by this very accusation, the Mensheviks revealed their opportunism, their true political nature, as toadies to the liberal bourgeoisie and conductors of its influence in the ranks of the proletariat. When the revolution becomes an unquestioned force, I said, even its opponents begin to "recognise the revolution"; and I pointed (in the summer of 1905) to the example of the Russian liber-

als, who remained constitutional monarchists. At present, in 1920, one might add that in Germany and Italy the liberal bourgeois—or at least the most educated and adroit of them—are ready to “recognise the revolution”. But by “recognising” the revolution, and at the same time refusing to recognise the *dictatorship* of a definite class (or of definite classes), the Russian liberals and the Mensheviks of that time, and the present-day German and Italian liberals, Turatists and Kautskyites, have revealed their *reformism*, their absolute unfitness to be revolutionaries.

Indeed, when the revolution has already become an unquestioned force, when even the liberals “recognise” it, and when the ruling classes not only see but also feel the invincible might of the oppressed masses, then the *entire question*—both to the theoreticians and the leaders of practical policy—reduces itself to an *exact class definition of the revolution*. However, without the concept of “dictatorship”, this precise class definition *cannot* be given. One cannot be a revolutionary *in fact* unless one prepares for dictatorship. This truth was not understood in 1905 by the Mensheviks, and it is not understood in 1920 by the Italian, German, French and other socialists, who are afraid of the severe “conditions” of the Communist International; this truth is feared by people who are capable of recognising the dictatorship *in word*, but are incapable of *preparing for it in deed*. It will therefore not be irrelevant to quote at length the explanation of Marx’s views, which I published in July 1905 in opposition to the Russian Mensheviks, but which is equally applicable to the West-European Mensheviks of 1920. (Instead of giving titles of newspapers, etc., I shall merely indicate whether Mensheviks or Bolsheviks are referred to.)

“In his notes to Marx’s articles in *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of 1848, Mehring tells us that one of the reproaches levelled at this newspaper by bourgeois publications was that it had allegedly demanded ‘the immediate introduction of a dictatorship as the sole means of achieving democracy’ (Marx, *Nachlass*, Vol. III, p. 53). From the vulgar bourgeois

standpoint the terms of dictatorship and democracy are mutually exclusive. Failing to understand the theory of class struggle and accustomed to seeing in the political arena the petty squabbling of the various bourgeois circles and coteries, the bourgeois understands by dictatorship the annulment of all liberties and guarantees of democracy, arbitrariness of every kind, and every sort of abuse of power, in a dictator's personal interests. In fact, it is precisely this vulgar bourgeois view that is to be observed among our Mensheviks, who attribute the partiality of the Bolsheviks for the slogan of 'dictatorship' to Lenin's 'passionate desire to try his luck' (*Iskra* No. 103, p. 3, column 2). In order to explain to the Mensheviks the meaning of the term class dictatorship as distinct from a personal dictatorship, and the tasks of a democratic dictatorship as distinct from a socialist dictatorship, it would not be amiss to dwell on the views of *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung*.\*

"'After a revolution,' *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* wrote on September 14, 1848, 'every provisional organisation of the state requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen [the head of the Ministry after March 18, 1848] for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of the old institutions. And while Herr Camphausen was lulling himself with constitutional illusions, the defeated party [i.e., the party of reaction] strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy and in the army, and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle.'

"These words, Mehring justly remarks, sum up in a few propositions all that was propounded in detail in *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in long articles on the Camphausen Ministry. What do these words of Marx tell us? That a provisional

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\* *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was published in Cologne during the 1848 revolution, from June 1848 to May 1849. It was edited by Karl Marx.—Ed.

revolutionary government *must* act dictatorially (a proposition which the Mensheviks were totally unable to grasp since they were fighting shy of the slogan of dictatorship), and that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of the old institutions (which is precisely what was clearly stated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party [Bolsheviks] on the struggle against counter-revolution, and was omitted in the Mensheviks' resolution as shown above). Third, and last, it follows from these words that Marx castigated the bourgeois democrats for entertaining 'constitutional illusions' in a period of revolution and open civil war. The meaning of these words becomes particularly obvious from the article in *Die Neue Rheinische Zeitung* of June 6, 1848.

"'A Constituent National Assembly,' Marx wrote, 'must first of all be an active, revolutionarily active assembly. The Frankfurt Assembly,\* however, is busying itself with school exercises in parliamentarianism while allowing the government to act. Let us assume that this learned assembly succeeds, after mature consideration, in evolving the best possible agenda and the best constitution, but what is the use of the best possible agenda and of the best possible constitution, if the German governments have in the meantime placed the bayonet on the agenda?'

"That is the meaning of the slogan: dictatorship. . . .

"Major questions in the life of nations are settled only by force. The reactionary classes themselves are usually the first to resort to violence, to civil war; they are the first to 'place the bayonet on the agenda', as the Russian autocracy has systematically and unswervingly been doing everywhere ever since January 9. And since such a situation has arisen,

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\* *The Frankfurt Assembly*—all-German National Assembly which was convened after the March 1848 revolution in Germany and sat in Frankfurt-am-Main. The Liberal majority of the Assembly pursued a cowardly and vacillating policy and did not have the courage to mobilise the people for a rebuff to the counter-revolution. In June 1849 the Assembly was disbanded by the government troops.—Ed.

since the bayonet has really become the main point on the political agenda, since insurrection has proved imperative and urgent—the constitutional illusions and school exercises in parliamentarianism become merely a screen for the bourgeois betrayal of the revolution, a screen to conceal the fact that the bourgeoisie is ‘recoiling’ from the revolution. It is precisely the slogan of dictatorship that the genuinely revolutionary class must advance, in that case.”

That was how the Bolsheviks reasoned on the dictatorship before the revolution of October 1905.

After the experience of this revolution, I made a detailed study of the question of dictatorship in the pamphlet, *The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers’ Party*, St. Petersburg, 1906 (the pamphlet is dated March 28, 1906). I shall quote the most important arguments from this pamphlet, only substituting for a number of proper names a simple indication as to whether the reference is to the Cadets or to the Mensheviks. Generally speaking, this pamphlet was directed against the Cadets, and partly also against the non-party liberals, the semi-Cadets, and the semi-Mensheviks. But, actually speaking, everything said therein about dictatorship applies in fact to the Mensheviks, who were constantly sliding to the Cadets’ position on this question.

“At the moment when the firing in Moscow was subsiding, and when the military and police dictatorship was indulging in its savage orgies, when repressions and mass torture were raging all over Russia, voices were raised in the Cadet press against the use of force by the Lefts, and against the strike committees organised by the revolutionary parties. The Cadet professors on the Dubasovs’ pay roll, who are peddling their science, went to the length of translating the word ‘dictatorship’ by the words ‘reinforced security’. These ‘men of science’ even distorted their high-school Latin in order to discredit the revolutionary struggle. Please note once and for all, you Cadet gentlemen, that dictatorship means unlimited power, based on force, and not on law. In civil war, any victorious power can only be a dictatorship. The point



is, however, that there is the dictatorship of a minority over the majority, the dictatorship of a handful of police officials over the people; and there is the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority of the people over a handful of tyrants, robbers and usurpers of the people's power. By their vulgar distortion of the scientific concept 'dictatorship', by their outcries against the violence of the Left at a time when the Right are resorting to the most lawless and outrageous violence the Cadet gentlemen have given striking evidence of the position the 'compromisers' take in the intense revolutionary struggle. When the struggle flares up, the 'compromiser' cravenly runs for cover. When the revolutionary people are victorious (October 17), the 'compromiser' creeps out of his hiding-place, boastfully preens himself, shouting and raving until he is hoarse: 'That was a "glorious" political strike!' But when victory goes to the counter-revolution, the 'compromiser' begins to heap hypocritical admonitions and edifying counsel on the vanquished. The successful strike was 'glorious'. The defeated strikes were criminal, mad, senseless, and anarchistic. The defeated insurrection was folly, a riot of surging elements, barbarity and stupidity. In short, his political conscience and political wisdom prompt the 'compromiser' to cringe before the side that for the moment is the strongest, to get in the way of the combatants, hindering first one side and then the other, to tone down the struggle and to blunt the revolutionary consciousness of the people who are waging a desperate struggle for freedom."

To proceed. It would be highly opportune at this point to quote the explanations on the question of dictatorship, directed against Mr. R. Blank. In 1906, this R. Blank, in a newspaper actually Menshevik though formally non-partisan, set forth the Mensheviks' views and extolled their efforts "to direct the Russian Social-Democratic movement along the path that is being followed by the whole of the international Social-Democratic movement, led by the great Social-Democratic Party of Germany".

In other words, like the Cadets, R. Blank contraposed the Bolsheviks, as unreasonable, non-Marxist, rebel, etc., revolutionaries, to the "reasonable" Mensheviks, and presented the German Social-Democratic Party as a Menshevik party as well. This is the usual method of the international trend of social-liberals, pacifists, etc., who in all countries extol the reformists and opportunists, the Kautskyites and the Longuetists, as "reasonable" socialists in contrast with the "madness" of the Bolsheviks.

This is how I answered Mr. R. Blank in the above-mentioned pamphlet of 1906:

"Mr. Blank compares two periods of the Russian revolution. The first period covers approximately October-December 1905. This is the period of the revolutionary whirlwind. The second is the present period, which, of course, we have a right to call the period of Cadet victories in the Duma elections, or, perhaps, if we take the risk of running ahead somewhat, the period of a Cadet Duma.

"Regarding this period, Mr. Blank says that the turn of intellect and reason has come again, and it is possible to resume deliberate, methodical and systematic activities. On the other hand, Mr. Blank describes the first period as a period in which theory diverged from practice. All Social-Democratic principles and ideas vanished; the tactics that had always been advocated by the founders of Russian Social-Democracy were forgotten, and even the very pillars of the Social-Democratic world outlook were uprooted.

"Mr. Blank's main assertion is merely a statement of fact: the whole theory of Marxism diverged from 'practice' in the period of the revolutionary whirlwind.

"Is that true? What is the first and main 'pillar' of Marxist theory? It is that the only thoroughly revolutionary class in modern society, and therefore, the advanced class in every revolution, is the proletariat. The question is then: has the revolutionary whirlwind uprooted this 'pillar' of the Social-Democratic world outlook? On the contrary, the whirlwind has vindicated it in the most brilliant fashion. It was

the proletariat that was the main and, at first, almost the only *fighter* in this period. For the first time in history, perhaps, a bourgeois revolution was marked by the employment of a purely proletarian weapon, i.e. the mass political strike, on a scale unprecedented even in the most developed capitalist countries. The proletariat marched into battle that was definitely revolutionary, at a time when the Struves and the Blanks were calling for participation in the Bulygin Duma and when the Cadet professors were exhorting the students to keep to their studies. With its proletarian weapon, the proletariat won for Russia the whole of that so-called 'constitution', which since then has only been mutilated, chopped about and curtailed. The proletariat in October 1905 employed those tactics of struggle that *six months before* had been laid down in the resolution of the *Bolshevik* Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which had strongly emphasised the necessity of combining the mass political strike with insurrection; and it is this combination that characterises the whole period of the 'revolutionary whirlwind', the whole of the last quarter of 1905. Thus our ideologist of petty bourgeoisie has distorted reality in the most brazen and glaring manner. He has not cited a single fact to prove that Marxist theory diverged from practical experience in the period of the 'revolutionary whirlwind'; he has tried to obscure the main feature of this whirlwind, which most brilliantly confirmed the correctness of 'all Social-Democratic principles and ideas', of 'all the pillars of the Social-Democratic world outlook'.

"But what was the real reason that induced Mr. Blank to come to the monstrously wrong conclusion that all Marxist principles and ideas vanished in the period of the 'whirlwind'? It is very interesting to examine this circumstance; it still further exposes the real nature of philistinism in politics.

"What is it that mainly distinguished the period of the 'revolutionary whirlwind' from the present 'Cadet' period, as regards the various forms of political activity and the

various methods by which the people make history? First and mainly it is that during the period of the 'whirlwind' certain special methods of making history were employed which are foreign to other periods of political life. The following were the most important of these methods: 1) the '*seizure*' by the people of political liberty—its exercise without any rights and laws, and without any limitations (freedom of assembly, even if only in the universities, freedom of the press, freedom of association, the holding of congresses, etc.); 2) the creation of new organs of *revolutionary authority*—Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Railwaymen's and Peasants' Deputies, new rural and urban authorities, and so on, and so forth. These bodies were set up exclusively by the *revolutionary* sections of the people, they were formed irrespective of all laws and regulations, entirely in a revolutionary way, as a product of the native genius of the people, as a manifestation of the independent activity of the people which had rid itself, or was ridding itself, of its old police fetters. Lastly, they were indeed organs of *authority*, for all their rudimentary, spontaneous, amorphous and diffuse character, in composition and in activity. They acted as a government, when, for example, they seized printing plants (in St. Petersburg), and arrested police officials who were preventing the revolutionary people from exercising their rights (such cases also occurred in St. Petersburg, where the new organ of authority concerned was weakest, and where the old government was strongest). They acted as a government when they appealed to the whole people to withhold money from the old government. They confiscated the old government's funds (the railway strike committees in the South) and used them for the needs of the new, the people's government. Yes, these were undoubtedly the embryos of a new, people's, or, if you will, revolutionary government. In their social and political character, they were the rudiments of the dictatorship of the revolutionary elements of the people. This surprises you, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter! You do not see here the 'reinforced security', which for the bourgeois is tantamount

to dictatorship? We have already told you that you have not the faintest notion of the scientific concept 'dictatorship'. We will explain it to you in a moment; but first we will deal with the *third* 'method' of activity in the period of the 'revolutionary whirlwind': *the use by the people of force against those who used force against the people*.

"The organs of authority that we have described represented a dictatorship in embryo, for they recognised *no* other authority, *no* law and *no* standards, no matter by whom established. Authority—unlimited, outside the law, and based on force in the most direct sense of the word—is dictatorship. But the force on which this new authority was based, and sought to base itself, was not the force of bayonets usurped by a handful of militarists, not the power of the 'police force', not the power of money, nor the power of any previously established institutions. It was nothing of the kind. The new organs of authority possessed neither arms, nor money, nor old institutions. Their power—can you imagine it, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter?—had nothing in common with the old instruments of power, nothing in common with 'reinforced security', if we do not have in mind the reinforced security established to protect the people from the tyranny of the police and of the other organs of the old regime.

"What was the power based on, then? It was based on the mass of the people. That is the *main* feature that distinguished this new authority from all preceding organs of the old regime. The latter were the instruments of the rule of the minority over the people, over the masses of workers and peasants. The former was an instrument of the rule of the people, of the workers and peasants, over the minority, over a handful of police bullies, over a handful of privileged nobles and government officials. That is the difference between dictatorship *over* the people and dictatorship *of* the revolutionary people: mark this well, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter! As the dictatorship of a minority, the old regime was able to maintain itself solely with the aid of police devices, solely by preventing the masses of the people from

taking part in the government, and from supervising the government. The old authority persistently distrusted the masses, feared the light, maintained itself by deception. As the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority, the new authority maintained itself and could maintain itself solely because it enjoyed the confidence of the vast masses, solely because it, in the freest, widest, and most resolute manner, enlisted all the masses in the task of government. It concealed nothing, it had no secrets, no regulations, no formalities. It said, in effect: are you a working man? Do you want to fight to rid Russia of the gang of police bullies? You are our comrade. Elect your deputy. Elect him at once, immediately, whichever way you think best. We will willingly and gladly accept him as a full member of our Soviet of Workers' Deputies, Peasant Committee, Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies, and so forth. It was an authority open to all, it carried out all its functions before the eyes of the masses, was accessible to the masses, sprang directly from the masses; and was a direct and immediate instrument of the popular masses, of their will. Such was the new authority, or, to be exact, its embryo, for the victory of the old authority trampled down the shoots of this young plant very soon.

"Perhaps, Mr. Blank or Mr. Kiesewetter, you will ask: why 'dictatorship', why 'force'? Is it necessary for a vast mass to use force against a handful? Can tens and hundreds of millions be dictators over a thousand or ten thousand?

"That question is usually put by people who for the first time hear the term 'dictatorship' used in what to them is a new connotation. People are accustomed to see only a police authority and only a police dictatorship. The idea that there can be government without any police, or that dictatorship need not be a police dictatorship, seems strange to them. You say that millions need not resort to force against thousands? You are mistaken; and your mistake arises from the fact that you do not regard a phenomenon in its process of development. You forget that the new authority does not drop from the skies, but grows up, arises parallel with, and in opposi-

tion to the old authority, in struggle against it. Unless force is used against tyrants armed with the weapons and instruments of power, the people cannot be liberated from tyrants.

"Here is a very simple analogy, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter, which will help you to grasp this idea, which seems so remote and 'fantastic' to the Cadet mind. Let us suppose that Avramov is injuring and torturing Spiridonova.\* On Spiridonova's side, let us say, are tens and hundreds of unarmed people. On Avramov's side there is a handful of Cossacks. What would the people do if Spiridonova were being tortured, not in a dungeon but in public? They would resort to force against Avramov and his body-guard. Perhaps they would sacrifice a few of their comrades, shot down by Avramov; but in the long run they would forcibly disarm Avramov and his Cossacks, and in all probability would kill on the spot some of these brutes in human form; they would clap the rest into some gaol to prevent them from committing any more outrages and to bring them to judgement before the people.

"So you see, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter, when Avramov and his Cossacks torture Spiridonova, that is military and police dictatorship over the people. When a revolutionary people (that is to say, a people capable of fighting the tyrants, and not only of exhorting, admonishing, regretting, condemning, whining and whimpering; not a philistine narrow-minded, but a revolutionary people) resorts to force against Avramov and the Avramovs, that is a dictatorship of the revolutionary people. It is a *dictatorship*, because it is the authority of the people over Avramov, an authority unrestricted by any laws (the philistines, perhaps, would be opposed to rescuing Spiridonova from Avramov by force, thinking it to be against the 'law'. They would no doubt ask: Is there a 'law' that permits the killing of Avramov? Have not some philistine ideologists built up the 'resist not evil'

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\* The Socialist-Revolutionary leader M. A. Spiridonova, arrested in 1906, was cruelly tortured by order of the Cossack officer Avramov.—Ed.

theory?). The scientific term 'dictatorship' means nothing more nor less than authority untrammelled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force. The term 'dictatorship' *has no other meaning but this*—mark this well, Cadet gentlemen. Again, in the analogy we have drawn, we see the dictatorship of *the people*, because the people, the mass of the population, unorganised, 'casually' assembled at the given spot, itself appears on the scene, exercises justice and metes out punishment, exercises power and creates a new, revolutionary law. Lastly, it is the dictatorship of the *revolutionary* people. Why only of the revolutionary, and not of the whole people? Because among the whole people, constantly suffering, and most cruelly, from the brutalities of the Avramovs, there are some who are physically cowed and terrified; there are some who are morally degraded by the 'resist not evil' theory, for example, or simply degraded not by theory, but by prejudice, habit, routine; and there are indifferent people, whom we call philistines, petty-bourgeois people who are more inclined to hold aloof from intense struggle, to pass by or even to hide themselves (for fear of getting mixed up in the fight and getting hurt). That is why the dictatorship is exercised, not by the whole people, but by the revolutionary people who, however, do not shun the whole people, who explain to all the people the motives of their actions in all their details, and who willingly enlist the *whole* people not only in 'administering' the state, but in governing it too, and indeed in organising the state.

"Thus our simple analogy contains *all the elements* of the scientific concept 'dictatorship of the revolutionary people', and also of the concept 'military and police dictatorship'. We can now pass from this simple analogy, which even a learned Cadet professor can grasp, to the more complex development of social life.

"Revolution, in the strict and direct sense of the word, is a period in the life of a people when the anger accumulated during centuries of Avramov brutalities breaks forth into



*actions*, not merely into words; and into the actions of *millions of the people*, not merely of individuals. The people awaken and rise up to rid themselves of the Avramovs. The people rescue the countless numbers of Spiridonovas in Russian life from the Avramovs, use force against the Avramovs, and establish their authority over the Avramovs. Of course, this does not take place so easily, and not 'all at once', as it did in our analogy, simplified for Professor Kiesewetter. This struggle of the people against the Avramovs, a struggle in the strict and direct sense of the word, this act of the people in throwing the Avramovs off their backs, stretches over months and years of 'revolutionary whirlwind'. This act of the people in throwing the Avramovs off their backs is the real content of what is called the great Russian revolution. This act, regarded from the standpoint of the methods of making history, takes place in the forms we have just described in discussing the revolutionary whirlwind, namely: the people seize political freedom, that is, the freedom which the Avramovs had prevented them from exercising; the people create a new, revolutionary authority, authority over the Avramovs, over the tyrants of the old police regime; the people use force against the Avramovs in order to remove, disarm and make harmless these wild dogs, all Avramovs, Durnovos, Dubasovs, Mins, etc., etc.

"Is it good that the people should apply such unlawful, irregular, unmethodical and unsystematic methods of struggle as seizing their liberty and creating a new, formally unrecognised and revolutionary authority, that it should use force against the oppressors of the people? Yes, it is very good. It is the supreme manifestation of the people's struggle for liberty. It marks that great period when the dreams of liberty cherished by the best men and women of Russia *come true*, when liberty becomes the cause of the masses of the people, and not merely of individual heroes. It is as good as the rescue by the crowd (in our analogy) of Spiridonova from Avramov, and the forcible disarming of Avramov and making him harmless.

"But this brings us to the very pivot of the Cadets' hidden thoughts and apprehensions. A Cadet is the ideologist of the philistines precisely because he looks at politics, at the liberation of the whole people, at revolution, through the spectacles of that same philistine who, in our analogy of the torture of Spiridonova by Avramov, would try to restrain the crowd, advise it not to break the law, not to hasten to rescue the victim from the hands of the torturer, since he is acting in the name of the law. In our analogy, of course, that philistine would be morally a monster; but in social life as a whole, we repeat, the philistine monster is not an individual, but a social phenomenon, conditioned, perhaps, by the deep-rooted prejudices of the bourgeois-philistine theory of law.

"Why does Mr. Blank hold it as self-evident that all Marxist principles were forgotten during the period of 'whirlwind'? Because he distorts Marxism into Brentanoism, and thinks that such 'principles' as the seizure of liberty, the establishment of revolutionary authority and the use of force by the people are not Marxist. This idea runs through the whole of Mr. Blank's article; and not only Mr. Blank's, but the articles of all the Cadets, and of all the writers in the liberal and radical camp who, today, are praising Plekhanov for his love of the Cadets; all of them, right up to the Bernsteinians of *Bez Zaglaviya*, Prokopovich, Kuskova and *tutti quanti*.

"Let us see how this opinion arose and why it was bound to arise.

"It arose directly out of the Bernsteinian or, to put it more broadly, the opportunist concepts of the West-European Social-Democrats. The fallacies of these concepts, which the 'orthodox' Marxists in Western Europe have been systematically exposing all along the line, are now being smuggled into Russia 'on the sly', in a different dressing and on a different occasion. The Bernsteinians accepted and accept Marxism *minus* its directly revolutionary aspect. They do not regard the parliamentary struggle as one of the weapons particularly suitable for definite historical periods, but as the

main and almost the sole form of struggle making 'force', 'seizure', 'dictatorship' unnecessary. It is this vulgar philistine distortion of Marxism that the Blanks and other liberal eulogisers of Plekhanov are now smuggling into Russia. They have become so accustomed to this distortion that they do not even think it necessary to prove that Marxist principles and ideas were forgotten in the period of the revolutionary whirlwind.

"Why was such an opinion bound to arise? Because it accords very well with the class standing and interests of the petty bourgeoisie. The ideologists of 'purified' bourgeois society agree with *all* the methods used by the Social-Democrats in their struggle *except those to which the revolutionary people resort in the period of a 'whirlwind'*, and which revolutionary Social-Democrats approve of and help in using. The interests of the bourgeoisie demand that the proletariat should take part in the struggle against the autocracy, but only in a way that does not lead to the supremacy of the proletariat and the peasantry, and does not completely eliminate the old, feudal-autocratic and police organs of state power. The bourgeoisie wants to preserve these organs, only establishing its direct control over them. It needs them *against the proletariat*, whose struggle would be too greatly facilitated if they were completely abolished. That is why the interests of the bourgeoisie as a class require both a monarchy and an Upper Chamber, and the prevention of the dictatorship of the revolutionary people. Fight the autocracy, the bourgeoisie says to the proletariat, but do not touch the old organs of state power, for I need them. Fight in a 'parliamentary' way, that is, within the limits that we will prescribe by agreement with the monarchy. Fight with the aid of organisations, only not organisations like general strike committees, Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' Deputies, etc., but organisations that are recognised, restricted and made safe for capital by a law that we shall pass by agreement with the monarchy.

"It is clear, therefore, why the bourgeoisie speaks with

disdain, contempt, anger and hatred about the period of the 'whirlwind', and with rapture, ecstasy and boundless philistine infatuation for . . . reaction, about the period of constitutionalism as protected by Dubasov. It is once again that constant, invariable quality of the Cadets: seeking to lean on the people and at the same time dreading their revolutionary initiative.

"It is also clear why the bourgeoisie is in such mortal fear of a repetition of the 'whirlwind', why it ignores and obscures the elements of the new revolutionary crisis, why it fosters constitutional illusions and spreads them among the people.

"Now we have fully explained why Mr. Blank and his like declare that in the period of the 'whirlwind' all Marxist principles and ideas were forgotten. Like all philistines, Mr. Blank accepts Marxism *minus* its revolutionary aspect; he accepts Social-Democratic methods of struggle *minus* the most revolutionary and directly revolutionary methods.

Mr. Blank's attitude towards the period of 'whirlwind' is extremely characteristic as an illustration of bourgeois failure to understand proletarian movements, bourgeois horror of acute and resolute struggle, bourgeois hatred for every manifestation of a radical and directly revolutionary method of solving social historical problems, a method that breaks up old institutions. Mr. Blank has betrayed himself and all his bourgeois narrow-mindedness. Somewhere he heard and read that during the period of whirlwind the Social-Democrats made 'mistakes'—and he had hastened to conclude, and to declare with self-assurance, in tones that brook no contradiction and require no proof, that all the 'principles' of Marxism (of which he has not the least notion!) were forgotten. As for these 'mistakes', we will remark: Has there been a period in the development of the working-class movement, in the development of Social-Democracy, when no mistakes were made, when there was no deviation to the right or the left? Is not the history of the parliamentary period of the struggle waged by the German Social-Dem-

ocratic Party—the period which all narrow-minded bourgeois all over the world regard as the utmost limit—filled with such mistakes? If Mr. Blank were not an utter ignoramus on problems of socialism, he would easily call to mind Mülberger, Dühring, the *Dampfersubvention* question, the 'Youth', and Bernsteinism and many, many more. But Mr. Blank is not interested in studying the actual course of development of the Social-Democratic movement; all he wants is to minimise the scope of the proletarian struggle in order to exalt the bourgeois paltriness of his Cadet Party.

"Indeed, if we examine the question in the light of the deviations that the Social-Democratic movement has made from its ordinary, 'normal' course, we shall see that even in this respect there was *more* and not less solidarity and ideological integrity among the Social-Democrats in the period of 'revolutionary whirlwind' than there was before it. The tactics adopted in the period of 'whirlwind' did not further estrange the two wings of the Social-Democratic Party, but brought them closer together. Former disagreements gave way to unity of opinion on the question of armed uprising. Social-Democrats of both factions were active in the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, these peculiar instruments of embryonic revolutionary authority; they drew the soldiers and peasants into these Soviets, they issued revolutionary manifestos jointly with the petty-bourgeois revolutionary parties. Old controversies of the prerevolutionary period gave way to unanimity on practical questions. The upsurge of the revolutionary tide pushed aside disagreements, compelling Social-Democrats to adopt militant tactics; it swept the question of the Duma into the background and put the question of insurrection on the order of the day; and it brought closer together the Social-Democrats and revolutionary bourgeois democrats in carrying out immediate tasks. In *Severny Golos*, the Mensheviks, jointly with the Bolsheviks, called for a general strike and insurrection; and they called upon the workers to continue this struggle until they had captured power.

The revolutionary situation itself suggested practical slogans. There were arguments only over matters of detail in the appraisal of events: for example, *Nachalo* regarded the Soviets of Workers' Deputies as organs of revolutionary local self-government, while *Novaya Zhizn* regarded them as embryonic organs of revolutionary state power that united the proletariat with the revolutionary democrats. *Nachalo* inclined towards the dictatorship of the proletariat. *Novaya Zhizn* advocated the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. But have not disagreements of this kind been observed at every stage of development of every socialist party in Europe?

"Mr. Blank's misrepresentation of the facts and his gross distortion of recent history are nothing more nor less than a sample of the smug bourgeois banality, for which periods of revolutionary whirlwind seem folly ('all principles are forgotten', 'even intellect and reason almost vanish'), while periods of suppression of revolution and philistine 'progress' (protected by the Dubasovs) seem to be periods of reasonable, deliberate and methodical activity. This comparative appraisal of two periods (the period of 'whirlwind' and the Cadet period) runs through the whole of Mr. Blank's article. When human history rushes forward with the speed of a locomotive, he calls it a 'whirlwind', a 'torrent', the 'vanishing' of all 'principles and ideas'. When history plods along at dray-horse pace, it becomes the very symbol of reason and method. When the masses of the people themselves, with all their virgin primitiveness and simple, rough determination begin to make history, begin to put 'principles and theories' immediately and directly into practice, the bourgeois is terrified and howls that 'intellect is retreating into the background' (is not the contrary the case, heroes of philistinism? Is it not the intellect of the masses, and not of individuals, that invades the sphere of history at such moments? Does not mass intellect at such a time become a virile, effective, and not an armchair force?). When the direct movement of the masses has been crushed by shootings, repressive measures, floggings,

unemployment and starvation, when all the parasites of professorial science financed by Dubasov come crawling out of their crevices and begin to administer affairs *on behalf of* the people, *in the name of the masses*, selling and betraying their interests to a privileged few—then the knights of philistinism think that an era of calm and peaceful progress has set in and that ‘the turn of intellect and reason has come’. The bourgeois always and everywhere remains true to himself: whether you take *Polyarnaya Zvezda* or *Nasha Zhizn*, whether you read Struve or Blank, you will always find this same narrow-minded, professorially pedantic and bureaucratically lifeless appraisal of periods of revolution and periods of reform. The former are periods of madness, *tolle Jahre*, the disappearance of intellect and reason. The latter are periods of ‘deliberate and systematic’ activities.

“Do not misinterpret what I am saying. I am not arguing that the Blanks prefer some periods to others. It is not a matter of preference; our subjective preferences do not determine the changes in historical periods. The thing is that *in analysing the characteristics* of this or that period (quite apart from our preferences or sympathies), the Blanks shamelessly *distort the truth*. The thing is that it is just the revolutionary periods which are distinguished by wider, richer, more deliberate, more methodical, more systematic, more courageous and more vivid making of history than periods of philistine, Cadet, reformist progress. But the Blanks turn the truth inside out! They palm off paltriness as magnificent making of history. They regard the inactivity of the oppressed or downtrodden masses as the triumph of ‘system’ in the work of bureaucrats and bourgeois. They shout about the disappearance of intellect and reason when, instead of the picking of draft laws to pieces by petty bureaucrats and liberal penny-a-liner\* journalists, there begins a period of direct political activity of the ‘common people’, who simply set to work without more ado to smash all the instruments for oppressing

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\* In the original these words are in English.—Ed.

the people, seize power and take what was regarded as belonging to all kinds of robbers of the people—in short, when the intellect and reason of millions of downtrodden people awaken not only to read books, but for action, vital human action, to make history.”

Such was the controversy that was waged in Russia in the years 1905 and 1906 on the question of the dictatorship.

Actually, the Dittmanns, Kautskys, Crispiens, and Hilferdings in Germany, Longuet and Co. in France, Turati and his friends in Italy, the MacDonalds and Snowdens in Britain, etc., argue about the dictatorship exactly as Mr. R. Blank and the Cadets did in Russia in 1905. They do not understand what dictatorship means, do not know how to prepare for it, and are incapable of understanding it and implementing it.

20.10.1920

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*Collected Works*, Vol. 31,  
pp. 340-61



## **Preliminary Draft Resolution of the Tenth Congress of the R.C.P. on Party Unity**

1. The Congress calls the attention of all members of the Party to the fact that the unity and cohesion of the ranks of the Party, the guarantee of complete mutual confidence among Party members and genuine team-work that really embodies the unanimity of will of the vanguard of the proletariat, are particularly essential at the present time, when a number of circumstances are increasing the vacillation among the petty-bourgeois population of the country.

2. Notwithstanding this, even before the general Party discussion on the trade unions, certain signs of factionalism had been apparent in the Party—the formation of groups with separate platforms, striving to a certain degree to segregate and create their own group discipline. Such symptoms of factionalism were manifested, for example, at a Party conference in Moscow (November 1920) and at a Party conference in Kharkov, by the so-called Workers' Opposition group, and partly by the so-called Democratic Centralism group.

All class-conscious workers must clearly realise that factionalism of any kind is harmful and impermissible, for no matter how members of individual groups may desire to safeguard Party unity, factionalism in practice inevitably leads to the weakening of team-work and to intensified and repeated attempts by the enemies of the governing Party, who have wormed their way into it, to widen the cleavage and to use it for counter-revolutionary purposes.

The way the enemies of the proletariat take advantage of every deviation from a thoroughly consistent communist line was perhaps most strikingly shown in the case of the Kronstadt mutiny, when the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries and whiteguards in all countries of the world immediately expressed their readiness to accept the slogans of the Soviet system, if only they might thereby secure the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, and when the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the bourgeois counter-revolutionaries in general resorted in Kronstadt to slogans calling for an insurrection against the Soviet Government of Russia ostensibly in the interest of the Soviet power. These facts fully prove that the whiteguards strive, and are able, to disguise themselves as Communists, and even as the most Left-wing Communists, solely for the purpose of weakening and destroying the bulwark of the proletarian revolution in Russia. Menshevik leaflets distributed in Petrograd on the eve of the Kronstadt mutiny likewise show how the Mensheviks took advantage of the disagreements and certain rudiments of factionalism in the Russian Communist Party actually in order to egg on and support the Kronstadt mutineers, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the whiteguards, while claiming to be opponents of mutiny and supporters of the Soviet power, only with supposedly slight modifications.

3. In this question, propaganda should consist, on the one hand, in a comprehensive explanation of the harmfulness and danger of factionalism from the standpoint of Party unity and of achieving unanimity of will among the vanguard of the proletariat as the fundamental condition for the success of the dictatorship of the proletariat; and, on the other hand, in an explanation of the peculiar features of the latest tactical devices of the enemies of the Soviet power. These enemies, having realised the hopelessness of counter-revolution under an openly whiteguard flag, are now doing their utmost to utilise the disagreements within the Russian Communist Party and to further the counter-revolution in

one way or another by transferring power to a political group which is outwardly closest to recognition of the Soviet power.

Propaganda must also teach the lessons of preceding revolutions, in which the counter-revolution made a point of supporting the opposition to the extreme revolutionary party which stood closest to the latter, in order to undermine and overthrow the revolutionary dictatorship and thus pave the way for the subsequent complete victory of the counter-revolution, of the capitalists and landowners.

4. In the practical struggle against factionalism, every organisation of the Party must take strict measures to prevent all factional actions. Criticism of the Party's shortcomings, which is absolutely necessary, must be conducted in such a way that every practical proposal shall be submitted immediately, without any delay, in the most precise form possible, for consideration and decision to the leading local and central bodies of the Party. Moreover, every critic must see to it that the form of his criticism takes account of the position of the Party, surrounded as it is by a ring of enemies, and that the content of his criticism is such that, by directly participating in Soviet and Party work, he can test the rectification of the errors of the Party or of individual Party members in practice. Analyses of the Party's general line, estimates of its practical experience, checkups of the fulfilment of its decisions, studies of methods of rectifying errors, etc., must under no circumstances be submitted for preliminary discussion to groups formed on the basis of "platforms", etc., but must in all cases be submitted for discussion directly to all the members of the Party. For this purpose, the Congress orders a more regular publication of *Diskussionny Listok* and special symposiums to promote unceasing efforts to ensure that criticism shall be concentrated on essentials and shall not assume a form capable of assisting the class enemies of the proletariat.

5. Rejecting in principle the deviation towards syndicalism and anarchism, which is examined in a special resolution, and instructing the Central Committee to secure the

complete elimination of all factionalism, the Congress at the same time declares that every practical proposal concerning questions to which the so-called Workers' Opposition group, for example, has devoted special attention, such as purging the Party of non-proletarian and unreliable elements, combating bureaucratic practices, developing democracy and workers' initiative, etc., must be examined with the greatest care and tested in practice. The Party must know that we have not taken all the necessary measures in regard to these questions because of various obstacles, but that, while ruthlessly rejecting impractical and factional pseudo-criticism, the Party will unceasingly continue—trying out new methods—to fight with all the means at its disposal against the evils of bureaucracy, for the extension of democracy and initiative, for detecting, exposing and expelling from the Party elements that have wormed their way into its ranks, etc.

6. The Congress, therefore, hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception formed on the basis of the one platform or another (such as the Workers' Opposition group, the Democratic Centralism group, etc.). Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall entail unconditional and instant expulsion from the Party.

7. In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the maximum unanimity in eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorises the Central Committee, in cases of breach of discipline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties, including expulsion, and in regard to members of the Central Committee, reduction to the status of alternate members and, as an extreme measure, expulsion from the Party. A necessary condition for the application of such an extreme measure to members of the Central Committee, alternate members of the Central Committee and members of the Control Commission is the convocation of a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee, to which all alternate mem-

bers of the Central Committee and all members of the Control Commission shall be invited. If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Party deems it necessary by a two-thirds majority to reduce a member of the Central Committee to the status of alternate member, or to expel him from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately.

*Collected Works*, Vol. 32,  
pp. 241-44

**Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P.  
Delivered to the Third Congress  
of the Communist International  
July 5, 1921**

Comrades, strictly speaking I was unable to prepare properly for this report. All that I was able to prepare for you in the way of systematic material was a translation of my pamphlet on the tax in kind and the theses on the tactics of the Russian Communist Party. To this I merely want to add a few explanations and remarks.

I think that to explain our Party's tactics we must first of all examine the *international situation*. We have already had a detailed discussion of the economic position of capitalism internationally, and the Congress has adopted definite resolutions on this subject. I deal with this subject in my theses very briefly, and only from the political standpoint. I leave aside the economic basis, but I think that in discussing the international position of our Republic we must, politically, take into account the fact that a certain equilibrium has now undoubtedly set in between the forces that have been waging an open, armed struggle against each other for the supremacy of this or that leading class. It is an equilibrium between bourgeois society, the international bourgeoisie as a whole, and Soviet Russia. It is, of course, an equilibrium only in a limited sense. It is only in respect to this military struggle, I say, that a certain equilibrium has been brought about in the international situation. It must be emphasised, of course, that this is only a relative equilibrium and a very un-

stable one. Much inflammable material has accumulated in capitalist countries, as well as in those countries which up to now have been regarded merely as the objects and not as the subjects of history, i.e., the colonies and semi-colonies. It is quite possible, therefore, that insurrections, great battles and revolutions may break out there sooner or later, and very suddenly too. During the past few years we have witnessed the direct struggle waged by the international bourgeoisie against the first proletarian republic. This struggle has been at the centre of the world political situation, and it is there that a change has taken place. Inasmuch as the attempt of the international bourgeoisie to strangle our Republic has failed, an equilibrium has set in, and a very unstable one it is, of course.

We know perfectly well, of course, that the international bourgeoisie is at present much stronger than our Republic, and that it is only the peculiar combination of circumstances that is preventing it from continuing the war against us. For several weeks now, we have witnessed fresh attempts in the Far East to renew the invasion, and there is not the slightest doubt that similar attempts will continue. Our Party has no doubts whatever on that score. The important thing for us is to establish that an unstable equilibrium does exist, and that we must take advantage of this respite, taking into consideration the characteristic features of the present situation, adapting our tactics to the specific features of this situation, and never forgetting that the necessity for armed struggle may arise again quite suddenly. Our task is still to organise and build up the Red Army. In connection with the food problem, too, we must continue to think first of all of our Red Army. We can adopt no other line in the present international situation, when we must still be prepared for fresh attacks and fresh attempts at invasion on the part of the international bourgeoisie. In regard to our practical policy, however, the fact that a certain equilibrium has been reached in the international situation has some significance, but only in the sense that we must admit that, although the

revolutionary movement has made progress, the development of the international revolution this year has not proceeded along as straight a line as we had expected.

When we started the international revolution, we did so not because we were convinced that we could forestall its development, but because a number of circumstances compelled us to start it. We thought: either the international revolution comes to our assistance, and in that case our victory will be fully assured, or we shall do our modest revolutionary work in the conviction that even in the event of defeat we shall have served the cause of the revolution and that our experience will benefit other revolutions. It was clear to us that without the support of the international world revolution the victory of the proletarian revolution was impossible. Before the revolution, and even after it, we thought: either revolution breaks out in the other countries, in the capitalistically more developed countries, immediately, or at least very quickly, or we must perish. In spite of this conviction, we did all we possibly could to preserve the Soviet system under all circumstances, come what may, because we knew that we were not only working for ourselves, but also for the international revolution. We knew this, we repeatedly expressed this conviction before the October Revolution, immediately after it, and at the time we signed the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty. And, generally speaking, this was correct.

Actually, however, events did not proceed along as straight a line as we had expected. In the other big, capitalistically more developed countries the revolution has not broken out to this day. True, we can say with satisfaction that the revolution is developing all over the world, and it is only thanks to this that the international bourgeoisie is unable to strangle us, in spite of the fact that, militarily and economically, it is a hundred times stronger than we are. (*Applause.*)

In Paragraph 2 of the theses I examine the manner in which this situation arose, and the conclusions that must be drawn from it. Let me add that my final conclusion is the



following: the development of the international revolution, which we predicted, is proceeding, but not along as straight a line as we had expected. It becomes clear at the first glance that after the conclusion of peace, bad as it was, it proved impossible to call forth revolution in other capitalist countries, although we know that the signs of revolution were very considerable and numerous, in fact, much more considerable and numerous than we thought at the time. Pamphlets are now beginning to appear which tell us that during the past few years and months these revolutionary symptoms in Europe have been much more serious than we had suspected. What, in that case, must we do now? We must now thoroughly prepare for revolution and make a deep study of its concrete development in the advanced capitalist countries. This is the first lesson we must draw from the international situation. As for our Russian Republic, we must take advantage of this brief respite in order to adapt our tactics to this zigzag line of history. This equilibrium is very important politically, because we clearly see that in many West-European countries, where the broad mass of the working class, and possibly the overwhelming majority of the population, are organised, the main bulwark of the bourgeoisie consists of the hostile working-class organisations affiliated to the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals. I speak of this in Paragraph 2 of the theses, and I think that in this connection I need deal with only two points, which were discussed during the debate on the question of tactics. First, winning over the majority of the proletariat. The more organised the proletariat is in a capitalistically developed country, the greater thoroughness does history demand of us in preparing for revolution, and the more thoroughly must we win over the majority of the working class. Second, the main bulwark of capitalism in the industrially developed capitalist countries is the part of the working class that is organised in the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals. But for the support of this section of the workers, these counter-revolutionary elements within the working

class, the international bourgeoisie would be altogether unable to retain its position. (*Applause.*)

Here I would also like to emphasise the significance of *the movement in the colonies*. In this respect we see in all the old parties, in all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois labour parties affiliated to the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, survivals of the old sentimental views: they insist on their profound sympathy for oppressed colonial and semi-colonial peoples. The movement in the colonial countries is still regarded as an insignificant national and totally peaceful movement. But this is not so. It has undergone great change since the beginning of the twentieth century: millions and hundreds of millions, in fact the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe, are now coming forward as independent, active and revolutionary factors. It is perfectly clear that in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism and will, perhaps, play a much more revolutionary part than we expect. It is important to emphasise the fact that, for the first time in our International, we have taken up the question of preparing for this struggle. Of course, there are many more difficulties in this enormous sphere than in any other, but at all events the movement is advancing. And in spite of the fact that the masses of toilers—the peasants in the colonial countries—are still backward, they will play a very important revolutionary part in the coming phases of the world revolution. (*Animated approval.*)

As regards *the internal political position of our Republic* I must start with a close examination of class relationships. During the past few months changes have taken place in this sphere, and we have witnessed the formation of new organisations of the exploiting class directed against us. The aim of socialism is to abolish classes. In the front ranks of the exploiting class we find the big landowners and the industrial capitalists. In regard to them, the work of destruc-

tion is fairly easy; it can be completed within a few months, and sometimes even a few weeks or days. We in Russia have expropriated our exploiters, the big landowners as well as the capitalists. They had no organisations of their own during the war and operated merely as the appendages of the military forces of the international bourgeoisie. Now, after we have repulsed the attacks of the international counter-revolution, organisations of the Russian bourgeoisie and of all the Russian counter-revolutionary parties have been formed abroad. The number of Russian émigrés scattered in all foreign countries may be estimated at one and a half to two millions. In nearly every country they publish daily newspapers, and all the parties, landowner and petty-bourgeois, not excluding the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, have numerous ties with foreign bourgeois elements, that is to say, they obtain enough money to run their own press. We find the collaboration abroad of absolutely all the political parties that formerly existed in Russia, and we see how the "free" Russian press abroad, from the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press to the most reactionary monarchist press, is championing the great landed interests. This, to a certain extent, facilitates our task, because we can more easily observe the forces of the enemy, his state of organisation, and the political trends in his camp. On the other hand, of course, it hinders our work, because these Russian counter-revolutionary émigrés use every means at their disposal to prepare for a fight against us. This fight again shows that, taken as a whole, the class instinct and class-consciousness of the ruling classes are still superior to those of the oppressed classes, notwithstanding the fact that the Russian revolution has done more than any previous revolution in this respect. In Russia, there is hardly a village in which the people, the oppressed, have not been roused. Nevertheless, if we take a cool look at the state of organisation and political clarity of views of the Russian counter-revolutionary émigrés, we shall find that the class-consciousness of the bourgeoisie is still superior to that of the exploit-

ed and the oppressed. These people make every possible attempt and skilfully take advantage of every opportunity to attack Soviet Russia in one way or another, and to dismember it. It would be very instructive—and I think the foreign comrades will do that—systematically to watch the most important aspirations, the most important tactical moves, and the most important trends of this Russian counter-revolution. It operates chiefly abroad, and it will not be very difficult for the foreign comrades to watch it. In some respects, we ought to learn from this enemy. These counter-revolutionary émigrés are very well informed, they are excellently organised and are good strategists. And I think that a systematic comparison and study of the manner in which they are organised and take advantage of every opportunity may have a powerful propaganda effect upon the working class. This is not general theory, it is practical politics; here we can see what the enemy has learned. During the past few years, the Russian bourgeoisie has suffered a terrible defeat. There is an old saying that a beaten army learns a great deal. The beaten reactionary army has learned a great deal, and has learned it thoroughly. It is learning with great avidity, and has really made much headway. When we took power at one swoop, the Russian bourgeoisie was unorganised and politically undeveloped. Now, I think, its development is on a par with modern, West-European development. We must take this into account, we must improve our own organisation and methods, and we shall do our utmost to achieve this. It was relatively easy for us, and I think that it will be equally easy for other revolutions, to cope with these two exploiting classes.

But, in addition to this class of exploiters, there is in nearly all capitalist countries, with the exception, perhaps, of Britain, a class of small producers and small farmers. The main problem of the revolution is how to fight these two classes. In order to be rid of them, we must adopt methods other than those employed against the big landowners and capitalists. We could simply expropriate and expel both

of these classes, and that is what we did. But we cannot do the same thing with the remaining capitalist classes, the small producers and the petty bourgeoisie, which are found in all countries. In most capitalist countries, these classes constitute a very considerable minority, approximately from thirty to forty-five per cent of the population. Add to them the petty-bourgeois elements of the working class, and you get even more than fifty per cent. These cannot be expropriated or expelled; other methods of struggle must be adopted in their case. From the international standpoint, if we regard the international revolution as one process, the significance of the period into which we are now entering in Russia is, in essence, that we must now find a practical solution for the problem of the relations the proletariat should establish with this last capitalist class in Russia. All Marxists have a correct and ready solution for this problem in theory. But theory and practice are two different things, and the practical solution of this problem is by no means the same as the theoretical solution. We know definitely that we have made serious mistakes. From the international standpoint, it is a sign of great progress that we are now trying to determine the attitude the proletariat in power should adopt towards the last capitalist class—the rock-bottom of capitalism—small private property, the small producer. This problem now confronts us in a practical way. I think we shall solve it. At all events, the experiment we are making will be useful for future proletarian revolutions, and they will be able to make better technical preparations for solving it.

In my theses I tried to analyse *the problem of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry*. For the first time in history there is a state with only two classes, the proletariat and the peasantry. The latter constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population. It is, of course, very backward. How do the relations between the peasantry and the proletariat, which holds political power, find practical expression in the development of the revolution? The first form is alli-

ance, close alliance. This is a very difficult task, but at any rate it is economically and politically feasible.

How did we approach this problem practically? We concluded an alliance with the peasantry. We interpret this alliance in the following way: the proletariat emancipates the peasantry from the exploitation of the bourgeoisie, from its leadership and influence, and wins it over to its own side in order jointly to defeat the exploiters.

The Menshevik argument runs like this: the peasantry constitutes a majority; we are pure democrats, therefore, the majority should decide. But as the peasantry cannot operate on its own, this, in practice, means nothing more nor less than the restoration of capitalism. The slogan is the same: Alliance with the peasantry. When we say that, we mean strengthening and consolidating the proletariat. We have tried to give effect to this alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, and the first stage was a military alliance. The three years of the Civil War created enormous difficulties, but in certain respects they facilitated our task. This may sound odd, but it is true. The war was not something new for the peasants; a war against the exploiters, against the big landowners, was something they quite understood. The overwhelming majority of the peasants were on our side. In spite of the enormous distances, and the fact that the overwhelming majority of our peasants are unable to read or write, they assimilated our propaganda very easily. This proves that the broad masses—and this applies also to the most advanced countries—learn faster from their own practical experience than from books. In Russia, moreover, learning from practical experience was facilitated for the peasantry by the fact that the country is so exceptionally large that in the same period different parts of it were passing through different stages of development.

In Siberia and in the Ukraine the counter-revolution was able to gain a temporary victory because there the bourgeoisie had the peasantry on its side, because the peasants were against us. The peasants frequently said, "We are Bolsheviks,

but not Communists. We are for the Bolsheviks because they drove out the landowners; but we are not for the Communists because they are opposed to individual farming." And for a time, the counter-revolution managed to win out in Siberia and in the Ukraine because the bourgeoisie made headway in the struggle for influence over the peasantry. But it took only a very short time to open the peasants' eyes. They quickly acquired practical experience and soon said, "Yes, the Bolsheviks are rather unpleasant people, we don't like them, but still they are better than the whiteguards and the Constituent Assembly." "Constituent Assembly" is a term of abuse not only among the educated Communists, but also among the peasants. They know from practical experience that the Constituent Assembly and the whiteguards stand for the same thing, that the former is inevitably followed by the latter. The Mensheviks also resort to a military alliance with the peasantry, but they fail to understand that a military alliance alone is inadequate. There can be no military alliance without an economic alliance. It takes more than air to keep a man alive; our alliance with the peasantry could not possibly have lasted any length of time without the economic foundation, which was the basis of our victory in the war against our bourgeoisie. After all our bourgeoisie has united with the whole of the international bourgeoisie.

The basis of our economic alliance with the peasantry was, of course, very simple, and even crude. The peasant obtained from us all the land and support against the big landowners. In return for this, we were to obtain food. This alliance was something entirely new and did not rest on the ordinary relations between commodity producers and consumers. Our peasants had a much better understanding of this than the heroes of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals. They said to themselves, "These Bolsheviks are stern leaders, but after all they are our own people." Be that as it may, we created in this way the foundations of a new economic alliance. The peasants gave their produce to the Red Army and received from the latter assistance in protecting their posses-

sions. This is always forgotten by the heroes of the Second International, who, like Otto Bauer, totally fail to understand the actual situation. We confess that the initial form of this alliance was very primitive and that we made very many mistakes. But we were obliged to act as quickly as possible, we had to organise supplies for the army at all costs. During the Civil War we were cut off from all the grain districts of Russia. We were in a terrible position, and it looks like a miracle that the Russian people and the working class were able to endure such suffering, want, and privation, sustained by nothing more than a deep urge for victory. (*Animated approval and applause.*)

When the Civil War came to an end, however, we faced a different problem. If the country had not been so laid waste after seven years of incessant war, it would, perhaps, have been possible to find an easier transition to the new form of alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. But bad as conditions in the country were, they were still further aggravated by the crop failure, the fodder shortage, etc. In consequence, the sufferings of the peasants became unbearable. We had to show the broad masses of the peasants immediately that we were prepared to change our policy, without in any way deviating from our revolutionary path, so that they could say, "The Bolsheviks want to improve our intolerable condition immediately, and at all costs."

And so, *our economic policy was changed*; the tax in kind superseded the requisitions. This was not invented at one stroke. You will find a number of proposals in the Bolshevik press over a period of months, but no plan that really promised success. But this is not important. The important thing is that we changed our economic policy, yielding to exclusively practical considerations, and impelled by necessity. A bad harvest, fodder shortage and lack of fuel—all, of course, have a decisive influence on the economy as a whole, including the peasant economy. If the peasantry goes on strike, we shall get no firewood; and if we get no firewood, the factories will have to idle. Thus, in the spring of 1921, the econom-



ic crisis resulting from the terrible crop failure and the fodder shortage assumed gigantic proportions. All that was the aftermath of the three years of Civil War. We had to show the peasantry that we could and would quickly change our policy in order immediately to alleviate their distress. We have always said—and it was also said at the Second Congress—that revolution demands sacrifices. Some comrades in their propaganda argue in the following way: we are prepared to stage a revolution, but it must not be too severe. Unless I am mistaken, this thesis was put forward by Comrade Šmeral in his speech at the Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. I read about it in the report published in the Reichenberg *Vorwärts*. There is evidently a Leftist wing there; hence this source cannot be regarded as being quite impartial. At all events, I must say that if Šmeral did say that, he was wrong. Some comrades who spoke after Šmeral at this Congress said, "Yes, we shall go along with Šmeral because in this way we shall avoid civil war." (*Laughter.*) If these reports are true, I must say that such agitation is neither communistic nor revolutionary. Naturally, every revolution entails enormous sacrifice on the part of the class making it. Revolution differs from ordinary struggle in that ten and even a hundred times more people take part in it. Hence every revolution entails sacrifices not only for individuals, but for a whole class. The dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia has entailed for the ruling class—the proletariat—sacrifices, want and privation unprecedented in history, and the case will, in all probability, be the same in every other country.

The question arises: *How are we to distribute this burden of privation?* We are the state power. We are able to distribute the burden of privation to a certain extent, and to impose it upon several classes, thereby relatively alleviating the condition of certain strata of the population. But what is to be our principle? Is it to be that of fairness, or of majority? No. We must act in a practical manner. We must distribute the burdens in such a way as to preserve the power of the

proletariat. This is our only principle. In the beginning of the revolution the working class was compelled to suffer incredible want. Let me state that from year to year our food policy has been achieving increasing success. And the situation as a whole has undoubtedly improved. But the peasantry in Russia has certainly gained more from the revolution than the working class. There is no doubt about that at all. From the standpoint of theory, this shows, of course, that our revolution was to some degree a bourgeois revolution. When Kautsky used this as an argument against us, we laughed. Naturally, a revolution which does not expropriate the big landed estates, expel the big landowners or divide the land is only a bourgeois revolution and not a socialist one. But we were the only party to carry the bourgeois revolution to its conclusion and to facilitate the struggle for the socialist revolution. The Soviet power and the Soviet system are institutions of the socialist state. We have already established these institutions, but we have not yet solved the problem of economic relations between the peasantry and the proletariat. Much remains to be done, and the outcome of this struggle depends upon whether we solve this problem or not. Thus, the distribution of the burden of privation is one of the most difficult practical problems. On the whole, the condition of the peasants has improved, but dire suffering has fallen to the lot of the working class, precisely because it is exercising its dictatorship.

I have already said that in the spring of 1921 the most appalling want caused by the fodder shortage and the crop failure prevailed among the peasantry, which constitutes the majority of our population. We cannot possibly exist unless we have good relations with the peasant masses. Hence, our task is to render them immediate assistance. The condition of the working class is extremely hard. It is suffering horribly. Those who have more political understanding, however, realise that in the interest of the dictatorship of the working class we must make tremendous efforts to help the peasants at any price. The vanguard of the working class has realised

this, but in that vanguard there are still people who cannot understand it, and who are too weary to understand it. They regarded it as a mistake and began to use the word "opportunism". They said, "The Bolsheviks are helping the peasants. The peasants, who are exploiting us, are getting everything they please, while the workers are starving." But is that opportunism? We are helping the peasants because without an alliance with them the political power of the proletariat is impossible, its preservation is inconceivable. It was this consideration of expediency and not that of fair distribution that was decisive for us. We are assisting the peasants because it is absolutely necessary to do so in order that we may retain political power. The supreme principle of the dictatorship is the maintenance of the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry in order that the proletariat may retain its leading role and its political power.

The only means we found for this was the *adoption of the tax in kind*, which was the inevitable consequence of the struggle. This year, we shall introduce this tax for the first time. This principle has not yet been tried in practice. From the military alliance we must pass to an economic alliance, and, theoretically, the only basis for the latter is the introduction of the tax in kind. It provides the only theoretical possibility for laying a really solid economic foundation for socialist society. The socialised factory gives the peasant its manufactures and in return the peasant gives his grain. This is the only possible form of existence of socialist society, the only form of socialist development in a country in which the small peasants constitute the majority, or at all events a very considerable minority. The peasants will give one part of their produce in the form of tax and another either in exchange for the manufactures of socialist factories, or through the exchange of commodities.

This brings us to the most difficult problem. It goes without saying that the tax in kind means *freedom to trade*. After having paid the tax in kind, the peasant will have the right freely to exchange the remainder of his grain. This

freedom of exchange implies freedom for capitalism. We say this openly and emphasise it. We do not conceal it in the least. Things would go very hard with us if we attempted to conceal it. Freedom to trade means freedom for capitalism, but it also means a new form of capitalism. It means that, to a certain extent, we are re-creating capitalism. We are doing this quite openly. It is state capitalism. But state capitalism in a society where power belongs to capital, and state capitalism in a proletarian state, are two different concepts. In a capitalist state, state capitalism means that it is recognised by the state controlled by it for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, and to the detriment of the proletariat. In the proletarian state, the same thing is done for the benefit of the working class, for the purpose of withstanding the as yet strong bourgeoisie, and of fighting it. It goes without saying that we must grant concessions to the foreign bourgeoisie, to foreign capital. Without the slightest denationalisation, we shall lease mines, forests and oilfields to foreign capitalists, and receive in exchange manufactured goods, machinery, etc., and thus restore our own industry.

Of course, we did not all agree on the question of state capitalism at once. But we are very pleased to note in this connection that our peasantry has been developing, that it has fully realised the historical significance of the struggle we are waging at the present time. Ordinary peasants from the most remote districts have come to us and said: "What! We have expelled our capitalists, the capitalists who speak Russian, and now foreign capitalists are coming!" Does not this show that our peasants have developed? There is no need to explain to a worker who is versed in economics why this is necessary. We have been so ruined by seven years of war that it will take many years to restore our industry. We must pay for our backwardness and weakness, and for the lessons we are now learning and must learn. Those who want to learn must pay for the tuition. We must explain this to one and all, and if we prove it in practice, the vast masses of the peasants and workers will agree with us, because in this way their

condition will be immediately improved, and because it will ensure the possibility of restoring our industry. What compels us to do this? We are not alone in the world. We exist in a system of capitalist states. . . . On one side, there are the colonial countries, but they cannot help us yet. On the other side, there are the capitalist countries, but they are our enemies. The result is a certain equilibrium, a very poor one, it is true. Nevertheless, we must reckon with the fact. We must not shut our eyes to it if we want to exist. Either we score an immediate victory over the whole bourgeoisie, or we pay the tribute.

We admit quite openly, and do not conceal the fact, that concessions in the system of state capitalism mean paying tribute to capitalism. But we gain time, and gaining time means gaining everything, particularly in the period of equilibrium, when our foreign comrades are preparing thoroughly for their revolution. The more thorough their preparations, the more certain will the victory be. Meanwhile, however, we shall have to pay the tribute.

A few words about our food policy. Undoubtedly, it was a bad and primitive policy. But we can also point to some achievements. In this connection I must once again emphasise that the only possible economic foundation of socialism is large-scale machine industry. Whoever forgets this is no Communist. We must analyse this problem concretely. We cannot present problems in the way the theoreticians of the old school of socialism do. We must present them in a practical manner. What is modern large-scale industry? It is *the electrification of the whole of Russia*. Sweden, Germany and America have almost achieved this, although they are still bourgeois. A Swedish comrade told me that in Sweden a large part of industry and thirty per cent of agriculture are electrified. In Germany and America, which are even more developed capitalistically, we see the same thing on a larger scale. Large-scale machine industry is nothing more nor less than the electrification of the whole country. We have already appointed a special commission consisting

of the country's best economists and engineers. It is true that nearly all of them are hostile to the Soviet power. All these specialists will come over to communism, but not our way, not by way of twenty years of underground work, during which we unceasingly studied and repeated over and over again the ABC of communism.

Nearly all the Soviet government bodies were in favour of inviting the specialists. The expert engineers will come to us when we give them practical proof that this will increase the country's productive forces. It is not enough to prove it to them in theory; we must prove it to them in practice, and we shall win these people over to our side if we present the problem differently, not from the standpoint of the theoretical propaganda of communism. We say: large-scale industry is the only means of saving the peasantry from want and starvation. Everyone agrees with this. But how can it be done? The restoration of industry on the old basis will entail too much labour and time. We must give industry a more modern form, i.e., we must adopt electrification. This will take much less time. We have already drawn up the plans for electrification. More than two hundred specialists—almost to a man opposed to the Soviet power—worked on it with keen interest, although they are not Communists. From the standpoint of technical science, however, they had to admit that this was the only correct way. Of course, we have a long way to go before the plan is achieved. The cautious specialists say that the first series of works will take at least ten years. Professor Ballod has estimated that it would take three to four years to electrify Germany. But for us even ten years is not enough. In my theses I quote actual figures to show you how little we have been able to do in this sphere up to now. The figures I quote are so modest that it immediately becomes clear that they are more of propaganda than scientific value. But we must begin with propaganda. The Russian peasants who fought in the world war and lived in Germany for several years learned how modern farming should be carried on in order to conquer famine. We must carry on extensive

propaganda in this direction. Taken by themselves, these plans are not yet of great practical value, but their propaganda value is very great.

The peasants realise that something new must be created. They realise that this cannot be done by everybody working separately, but by the state working as a whole. The peasants who were prisoners of war in Germany found out what real cultural life is based on. Twelve thousand kilowatts is a very modest beginning. This may sound funny to the foreigner who is familiar with electrification in America, Germany or Sweden. But he laughs best who laughs last. It is, indeed, a modest beginning. But the peasants are beginning to understand that new work must be carried out on a grand scale, and that this work has already begun. Enormous difficulties will have to be overcome. We shall try to establish relations with the capitalist countries. We must not regret having to give the capitalists several hundred million kilogrammes of oil on condition that they help us to electrify our country.

And now, in conclusion, a few words about "*pure democracy*". I will read you a passage from Engels' letter to Bebel of December 11, 1884. He wrote:

"Pure democracy... when the moment of revolution comes, acquires a temporary importance as the extreme bourgeois party, as which it already played itself off in Frankfort, and as the final sheet-anchor of the whole bourgeois and even feudal economy. . . . Thus between March and September 1848 the whole feudal-bureaucratic mass strengthened the liberals in order to hold down the revolutionary masses.... In any case our sole adversary on the day of the crisis and on the day after the crisis will be the *whole of the reaction which will group around pure democracy*, and this, I think, should not be lost sight of."

Our approach must differ from that of the theoreticians. The whole reactionary mass, not only bourgeois, but also feudal, groups itself around "pure democracy". The German comrades know better than anyone else what "pure democra-

cy" means, for Kautsky and the other leaders of the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals are defending this "pure democracy" from the wicked Bolsheviks. If we judge the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, not by what they say, but by what they do, we shall find that they are nothing but representatives of petty-bourgeois "pure democracy". In the course of our revolution they have given us a classic example of what "pure democracy" means and again during the recent crisis, in the days of the Kronstadt mutiny. There was serious unrest among the peasantry, and discontent was also rife among the workers. They were weary and exhausted. After all, there is a limit to human endurance. They had starved for three years, but you cannot go on starving for four or five years. Naturally, hunger has a tremendous influence on political activity. How did the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks behave? They wavered all the time, thereby strengthening the bourgeoisie. The organisation of all the Russian parties abroad has revealed the present state of affairs. The shrewdest of the leaders of the Russian big bourgeoisie said to themselves: "We cannot achieve victory in Russia immediately. Hence our slogan must be: 'Soviets without the Bolsheviks' ". Milyukov, the leader of the Constitutional-Democrats, defended the Soviet power from the attacks of the Socialist-Revolutionaries. This sounds very strange; but such are the practical dialectics which we, in our revolution, have been studying in a peculiar way, from the practical experience of our struggle and of the struggle of our enemies. The Constitutional-Democrats defend "Soviets without the Bolsheviks" because they understand the position very well and hope that a section of the people will rise to the bait. That is what the clever Constitutional-Democrats say. Not all the Constitutional-Democrats are clever, of course, but some of them are, and these have learned something from the French Revolution. The present slogan is to fight the Bolsheviks, whatever the price, come what may. The whole of the bourgeoisie is now helping the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who



are now the vanguard of all reaction. In the spring we had a taste of the fruits of this counter-revolutionary co-operation.

That is why we must continue our relentless struggle against these elements. Dictatorship is a state of intense war. That is just the state we are in. There is no military invasion at present; but we are isolated. On the other hand, however, we are not entirely isolated, since the whole international bourgeoisie is incapable of waging open war against us just now, because the whole working class, even though the majority is not yet communist, is sufficiently class-conscious to prevent intervention. The bourgeoisie is compelled to reckon with the temper of the masses even though they have not yet entirely sided with communism. That is why the bourgeoisie cannot now start an offensive against us, although one is never ruled out. Until the final issue is decided, this awful state of war will continue. And we say: "*A la guerre comme à la guerre*; we do not promise any freedom, or any democracy." We tell the peasants quite openly that they must choose between the rule of the bourgeoisie and the rule of the Bolsheviks—in which case we shall make every possible concession within the limits of retaining power, and later we shall lead them to socialism. Everything else is deception and pure demagoguery. Ruthless war must be declared against this deception and demagoguery. Our point of view is: for the time being—big concessions and the greatest caution, precisely because a certain equilibrium has set in, precisely because we are weaker than our combined enemies, and because our economic basis is too weak and we need a stronger one.

That, comrades, is what I wanted to tell you about our tactics, the tactics of the Russian Communist Party. (*Prolonged applause.*)

## **The Importance of Gold Now and After the Complete Victory of Socialism**

The best way to celebrate the anniversary of a great revolution is to concentrate attention on its unsolved problems. It is particularly appropriate and necessary to celebrate the revolution in this way at a time when we are faced with fundamental problems that the revolution has not yet solved, and when we must master something new (from the point of view of what the revolution has accomplished up to now) for the solution of these problems.

What is new for our revolution at the present time is the need for a "reformist", gradual, cautious and roundabout approach to the solution of the fundamental problems of economic development. This "novelty" gives rise to a number of questions, perplexities and doubts in both theory and practice.

A theoretical question. How can we explain the transition from a series of extremely revolutionary actions to extremely "reformist" actions in the same field at a time when the revolution as a whole is making victorious progress? Does it not imply a "surrender of positions", an "admission of defeat", or something of that sort? Of course, our enemies—from the semi-feudal type of reactionaries to the Mensheviks or other knights of the Two-and-a-Half International—say that it does. They would not be enemies if they did not shout something of the sort on every pretext, and even without any pretext. The touching unanimity that prevails on this question among all parties, from the feudal reactionaries to

the Mensheviks, is only further proof that all these parties constitute "one reactionary mass" opposed to the proletarian revolution (as Engels foresaw in his letters to Bebel of 1875 and 1884—be it said in parenthesis).

But there is "perplexity", shall we say, among friends, too.

Restore large-scale industry, organise the direct exchange of its goods for the produce of small-peasant farming, and thus assist the socialisation of the latter. For the purpose of restoring large-scale industry, borrow from the peasants a certain quantity of foodstuffs and raw materials by requisitioning—this was the plan (or method, system) that we followed for more than three years, up to the spring of 1921. This was a revolutionary approach to the problem—to break up the old social-economic system completely at one stroke and to substitute a new one for it.

Since the spring of 1921, instead of this approach, plan, method, or mode of action, we have been adopting (we have not yet "adopted" but are still "adopting", and have not yet fully realised it) a totally different method, a reformist type of method: not to *break up* the old social-economic system—trade, petty production, petty proprietorship, capitalism—but to *revive* trade, petty proprietorship, capitalism, while cautiously and gradually getting the upper hand over them, or making it possible to subject them to state regulation *only to the extent* that they revive.

That is an entirely different approach to the problem.

Compared with the previous, revolutionary, approach, it is a reformist approach (revolution is a change which breaks the old order to its very foundations, and not one that cautiously, slowly and gradually remodels it, taking care to break as little as possible).

The question that arises is this. If, after trying revolutionary methods, you find they have failed and adopt reformist methods, does it not prove that you are declaring the revolution to have been a mistake in general? Does it not prove that you should not have started with the revolution but

should have started with reforms and confined yourselves to them?

That is the conclusion which the Mensheviks and others like them have drawn. But this conclusion is either sophistry, a mere fraud perpetrated by case-hardened politicians, or it is the childishness of political tyros. The greatest, perhaps the only danger to the genuine revolutionary is that of exaggerated revolutionism, ignoring the limits and conditions in which revolutionary methods are appropriate and can be successfully employed. True revolutionaries have mostly come a cropper when they began to write "revolution" with a capital R, to elevate "revolution" to something almost divine, to lose their heads, to lose the ability to reflect, weigh and ascertain in the coolest and most dispassionate manner at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere of action you must act in a revolutionary manner, and at what moment, under what circumstances and in which sphere you must turn to reformist action. True revolutionaries will perish (not that they will be defeated from outside, but that their work will suffer internal collapse) only if they abandon their sober outlook and take it into their heads that the "great, victorious, world" revolution can and must solve all problems in a revolutionary manner under all circumstances and in all spheres of action. If they do this, their doom is certain.

Whoever gets such ideas into his head is lost because he has foolish ideas about a fundamental problem; and in a fierce war (and revolution is the fiercest sort of war) the penalty for folly is defeat.

What grounds are there for assuming that the "great, victorious, world" revolution can and must employ only revolutionary methods? There are none at all. The assumption is a pure fallacy; this can be proved by purely theoretical propositions if we stick to Marxism. The experience of our revolution also shows that it is a fallacy. From the theoretical point of view—foolish things are done in time of revolution just as at any other time, said Engels, and he was right. We

must try to do as few foolish things as possible, and rectify those that are done as quickly as possible, and we must, as soberly as we can, estimate which problems can be solved by revolutionary methods at any given time and which cannot. From the point of view of our practical experience the Brest peace was an example of action that was not revolutionary at all; it was reformist, and even worse, because it was a retreat, whereas, as a general rule, reformist action advances slowly, cautiously, gradually, and does not move backward. The proof that our tactics in concluding the Brest peace were correct is now so complete, so obvious to all and generally admitted, that there is no need to say any more about it.

Our revolution has completed only its bourgeois-democratic work; and we have every right to be proud of this. The proletarian or socialist part of its work may be summed up in three main points: (1) The revolutionary withdrawal from the imperialist world war; the exposure and *halting* of the slaughter organised by the two world groups of capitalist predators—for our part we have done this in full; others could have done it only if there had been a revolution in a number of advanced countries. (2) The establishment of the Soviet system, as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. An epoch-making change has been made. The era of bourgeois-democratic parliamentarism has come to an end. A new chapter in world history—the era of proletarian dictatorship—has been opened. The Soviet system and all forms of proletarian dictatorship will have the finishing touches put to them and be completed only by the efforts of a number of countries. There is still a great deal we have not done in this field. It would be unpardonable to lose sight of this. Again and again we shall have to improve the work, redo it, start from the beginning. Every step onward and upward that we take in developing our productive forces and our culture must be accompanied by the work of improving and altering our Soviet system—we are still low in the scale of economics and culture. Much will have to be altered, and

to be "embarrassed" by this would be absurd (if not worse). (3) The creation of the economic basis of the socialist system; what is most important, most fundamental in this field, has not yet been completed. This, however, is our soundest basis, soundest from the point of view of principle and from the practical point of view, from the point of view of the R.S.F.S.R. today and from the international point of view.

Since the main features of this basis have not yet been completed we must concentrate all our attention upon it. The difficulty here lies in the form of the transition.

In April 1918, in my *Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government*, I wrote:

"It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, their difference from each other in the historical chain of events are not as simple and not as senseless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith."

At the present time, in the sphere of activity with which we are dealing, this link is the revival of home *trade* under proper state regulation (direction). Trade is the "link" in the historical chain of events, in the transitional forms of our socialist construction in 1921-22, which we, the proletarian government, we, the ruling Communist Party, "*must grasp with all our might*". If we "grasp" this link firmly enough *now* we shall certainly control the *whole* chain in the very near future. If we do not, we shall not control the whole chain, we shall not create the foundation for socialist social and economic relations.

Communism and trade?! It sounds strange. The two seem to be unconnected, incongruous, poles apart. But if we study it from the point of view of *economics*, we shall find that the

one is no more remote from the other than communism is from small-peasant, patriarchal farming.

When we are victorious on a world scale I think we shall use gold for the purpose of building public lavatories in the streets of some of the largest cities of the world. This would be the most "just" and most educational way of utilising gold for the benefit of those generations which have not forgotten how, for the sake of gold, ten million men were killed and thirty million maimed in the "great war for freedom", the war of 1914-18, the war that was waged to decide the great question of which peace was the worst, that of Brest or that of Versailles; and how, for the sake of this same gold, they certainly intend to kill twenty million men and to maim sixty million in a war, say, in 1925, or 1928, between, say, Japan and the U.S.A., or between Britain and the U.S.A., or something like that.

But however "just", useful, or humane it would be to utilise gold for this purpose, we nevertheless say that we must work for another decade or two with the same intensity and with the same success as in the 1917-21 period, only in a much wider field, in order to reach this stage. Meanwhile, we must save the gold in the R.S.F.S.R., sell it at the highest price, buy goods with it at the lowest price. When you live among wolves, you must howl like a wolf, while as for exterminating all the wolves, as should be done in a rational human society, we shall act up to the wise Russian proverb: "Boast not before but after the battle".

Trade is the only possible economic link between the scores of millions of small farmers and large-scale industry *if... if* there is not alongside these farmers an excellently equipped large-scale machine industry with a network of power transmission lines, an industry whose technical equipment, organisational "superstructures" and other features are sufficient to enable it to supply the small farmers with the best goods in larger quantities, more quickly and more cheaply than before. On a world scale this "if" *has already been achieved*, this condition already exists. But the country, formerly one

of the most backward capitalist countries, which tried alone directly and at one stroke to create, to put into use, to organise practically the *new* links between industry and agriculture, failed to achieve this task by "direct assault", and must now try to achieve it by a number of slow, gradual, and cautious "siege" operations.

The proletarian government can control trade, direct it into definite channels, keep it within certain limits. I shall give a small, a very small example. In the Donets Basin a slight, still very slight, but undoubted revival in the economy has commenced, partly due to a rise in the productivity of labour at the large state mines, and partly due to the leasing of small mines to peasants. As a result, the proletarian government is receiving a small additional quantity (a miserably small quantity compared with what is obtained in the advanced countries, but an appreciable quantity considering our poverty-stricken condition) of coal at a cost of, say, 100; and it is selling this coal to various government departments at a price of, say, 120, and to private individuals at a price of, say, 140. (I must say in parenthesis that my figures are quite arbitrary, first, because I do not know the exact figures, and, secondly, I would not now make them public even if I did.) This looks as if we are *beginning*, if only in very modest dimensions, to control *exchange* between industry and agriculture, to control wholesale trade, to cope with the task of taking in hand the available, small backward industry, or large-scale but weakened and ruined industry; of reviving trade on the *present* economic basis; of making the ordinary middle peasant (and that is the typical peasant, the peasant in the mass, the true representative of the petty-bourgeois milieu) feel the benefit of the economic revival; of taking advantage of it for the purpose of more systematically and persistently, more widely and successfully restoring large-scale industry.

We shall not surrender to "sentimental socialism", or to the old Russian semi-aristocratic, semi-muzhik and patriarchal mood, with their supreme contempt for trade. We



can use, and, since it is necessary, we *must* learn to use, all transitional economic forms for the purpose of strengthening the link between the peasantry and the proletariat, for the purpose of immediately reviving the economy of our ruined and tormented country, of improving industry, and facilitating such future, more extensive and more deep-going, measures as electrification.

Marxism alone has precisely and correctly defined the relation of reforms to revolution, although Marx was able to see this relation only from one aspect—under the conditions preceding the first to any extent permanent and lasting victory of the proletariat, if only in one country. Under those conditions, the basis of the proper relation was that reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Throughout the capitalist world this relation is the foundation of the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat—the ABC, which is being distorted and obscured by the corrupt leaders of the Second International and the half-pedantic and half-finicky knights of the Two-and-a-Half International. After the victory of the proletariat, if only in one country, something new enters into the relation between reforms and revolution. In principle, it is the same as before, but a change in form takes place, which Marx himself could not foresee, but which can be appreciated only on the basis of the philosophy and politics of Marxism. Why were we able to carry out the Brest retreat successfully? Because we had advanced so far that we had room in which to retreat. At such dizzy speed, *in a few weeks*, from October 25, 1917, to the Brest peace, we built up the Soviet state, withdrew from the imperialist war in a revolutionary manner and completed the bourgeois-democratic revolution so that *even* the great backward movement (the Brest peace) left us sufficient room in which to take advantage of the “respite” and to march forward victoriously against Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, Pilsudski and Wrangel.

Before the victory of the proletariat, reforms are a by-product of the revolutionary class struggle. After the victory

(while still remaining a "by-product" on an international scale) they are, in addition, for the country in which victory has been achieved, a necessary and legitimate breathing space when, after the utmost exertion of effort, it becomes obvious that sufficient strength is lacking for the revolutionary accomplishment of some transition or another. Victory creates such a "reserve of strength" that it is possible to hold out even in a forced retreat, hold out both materially and morally. Holding out materially means preserving a sufficient superiority of forces to prevent the enemy from inflicting utter defeat. Holding out morally means not allowing oneself to become demoralised and disorganised, keeping a sober view of the situation, preserving vigour and firmness of spirit, even retreating a long way, but not too far, and in such a way as to stop the retreat in time and revert to the offensive.

We retreated to state capitalism, but we did not retreat too far. We are now retreating to the state regulation of trade, but we shall not retreat too far. There are visible signs that the retreat is coming to an end; there are signs that we shall be able to stop this retreat in the not too distant future. The more conscious, the more unanimous, the more free from prejudice we are in carrying out this necessary retreat, the sooner shall we be able to stop it, and the more lasting, speedy and extensive will be our subsequent victorious advance.

November 5, 1921

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Continuation of the notes.  
December 30, 1922

## The Question of Nationalities or "Autonomisation"\*

I suppose I have been very remiss with respect to the workers of Russia for not having intervened energetically and decisively enough in the notorious question of autonomisation,\*\* which, it appears, is officially called the question of the union of Soviet socialist republics.

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\* This letter was prompted by the conflict in the Georgian Communist Party between the Transcaucasian Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) led by G. K. Orjonikidze and the Mdivani group, who constituted a majority in the G.C.P. Central Committee.

Expressing their disagreement with the position of the Transcaucasian Committee, Mdivani and his followers withdrew from the G.C.P. Central Committee and lodged a complaint with the R.C.P.(B.) Central Committee. On November 25, 1922, the Political Bureau adopted a decision to send a special commission headed by F. E. Dzerzhinsky to Georgia to investigate the matter without delay.

Lenin connected the "Georgian question" with the general question of forming the U.S.S.R., expressing his concern that the principles of proletarian internationalism should be consistently applied in uniting the Soviet Republics. Lenin intended to publish this letter as an article but in view of a sudden sharp deterioration of his condition due to illness he did not make any arrangements about this. On April 16, 1923 Lenin's secretary L. A. Fotieva sent the letter to the Political Bureau. At the Twelfth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) it was read to the delegates. According to Lenin's recommendations a number of important addenda were introduced in the draft decision of the Congress on the national question.—*Ed.*

\*\* *Autonomisation*—the idea to unite the Soviet Republics through their entry into the R.S.F.S.R. as autonomous units. This was proposed by Stalin. Lenin subjected this project to serious criticism and proposed

When this question arose last summer, I was ill; and then in autumn I relied too much on my recovery and on the October and December plenary meetings giving me an opportunity of intervening in this question. However, I did not manage to attend the October Plenary Meeting (when this question came up) or the one in December, and so the question passed me by almost completely.

I have only had time for a talk with Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who came from the Caucasus and told me how this matter stood in Georgia. I have also managed to exchange a few words with Comrade Zinoviev and express my apprehensions on this matter. From what I was told by Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who was at the head of the commission sent by the C.C. to "investigate" the Georgian incident, I could only draw the greatest apprehensions. If matters had come to such a pass that Orjonikidze could go to the extreme of applying physical violence, as Comrade Dzerzhinsky informed me, we can imagine what a mess we have got ourselves into. Obviously the whole business of "autonomisation" was radically wrong and badly timed.

It is said that a united apparatus was needed. Where did that assurance come from? Did it not come from that same Russian apparatus which, as I pointed out in one of the preceding sections of my diary, we took over from tsarism and slightly anointed with Soviet oil?

There is no doubt that that measure should have been delayed somewhat until we could say that we vouched for our apparatus as our own. But now, we must, in all conscience, admit the contrary; the apparatus we call ours is, in fact, still quite alien to us; it is a bourgeois and tsarist hotch-potch and there has been no possibility of getting rid of it in the course of the past five years without the help of other

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a fundamentally different solution, namely, a voluntary union of all the Soviet Republics in a new state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, based on full equality. On December 30, 1922, the First Congress of Soviets of the U.S.S.R. adopted its decision on the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.—*Ed.*

countries and because we have been "busy" most of the time with military engagements and the fight against famine.

It is quite natural that in such circumstances the "freedom to secede from the union" by which we justify ourselves will be a mere scrap of paper, unable to defend the non-Russians from the onslaught of that really Russian man, the Great-Russian chauvinist, in substance a rascal and a tyrant, such as the typical Russian bureaucrat is. There is no doubt that the infinitesimal percentage of Soviet and sovietised workers will drown in that tide of chauvinistic Great-Russian riffraff like a fly in milk.

It is said in defence of this measure that the People's Commissariats directly concerned with national psychology and national education were set up as separate bodies. But there the question arises: can these People's Commissariats be made quite independent? and secondly: were we careful enough to take measures to provide the non-Russians with a real safeguard against the truly Russian bully? I do not think we took such measures although we could and should have done so.

I think that Stalin's haste and his infatuation with pure administration, together with his spite against the notorious "nationalist-socialism", played a fatal role here. In politics spite generally plays the basest of roles.

I also fear that Comrade Dzerzhinsky, who went to the Caucasus to investigate the "crime" of those "nationalist-socialists", distinguished himself there by his truly Russian frame of mind (it is common knowledge that people of other nationalities who have become russified overdo this Russian frame of mind) and that the impartiality of his whole commission was typified well enough by Orjonikidze's "manhandling". I think that no provocation or even insult can justify such Russian manhandling and that Comrade Dzerzhinsky was inexcusably guilty in adopting a light-hearted attitude towards it.

For all the citizens in the Caucasus Orjonikidze was the authority. Orjonikidze had no right to display that irritabili-

ty to which he and Dzerzhinsky referred. On the contrary, Orjonikidze should have behaved with a restraint which cannot be demanded of any ordinary citizen, still less of a man accused of a "political" crime. And, to tell the truth, those nationalist-socialists were citizens who were accused of a political crime, and the terms of the accusation were such that it could not be described otherwise.

Here we have an important question of principle: how is internationalism to be understood?\*

LENIN

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December 30, 1922  
Taken down by M. V.

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\* After this the following phrase was crossed out in the shorthand text: "It seems to me that our comrades have not studied this important question of principle sufficiently."—Ed.

## The Question of Nationalities or "Autonomisation"

(Continued)

In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it. It is sufficient to recall my Volga reminiscences of how non-Russians are treated; how the Poles are not called by any other name than Polyachishka, how the Tatar is nicknamed Prince, how the Ukrainians are always Khokhols and the Georgians and other Caucasian nationals always Kapkasians.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation, the great nation, that must make up for the inequality which obtains in actual practice. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question, he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view.

What is important for the proletarian? For the proletarian

it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past.

I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is neglectful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of "nationalist-socialism" (whereas he himself is a real and true "nationalist-socialist", and even a vulgar Great-Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice; "offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest—to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity, and consequently of the proletarian class struggle, requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletarian of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation.

LENIN



Continuation of the notes.

December 31, 1922

What practical measures must be taken in the present situation?

*Firstly*, we must maintain and strengthen the union of socialist republics. Of this there can be no doubt. This measure is necessary for us and it is necessary for the world communist proletariat in its struggle against the world bourgeoisie and its defence against bourgeois intrigues.

*Secondly*, the union of socialist republics must be retained for its diplomatic apparatus. By the way, this apparatus is an exceptional component of our state apparatus. We have not allowed a single influential person from the old tsarist apparatus into it. All sections with any authority are composed of Communists. That is why it has already won for itself (this may be said boldly) the name of a reliable communist apparatus purged to an incomparably greater extent of the old tsarist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements than that which we have had to make do with in other People's Commissariats.

*Thirdly*, exemplary punishment must be inflicted on Comrade Orjonikidze (I say this all the more regretfully as I am one of his personal friends and have worked with him abroad) and the investigation of all the material which Dzerzhinsky's commission has collected must be completed or started over again to correct the enormous mass of wrongs and biased judgements which it doubtlessly contains. The political responsibility for all this truly Great-Russian nationalist campaign must, of course, be laid on Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.

*Fourthly*, the strictest rules must be introduced on the use of the national language in the non-Russian republics of our union, and these rules must be checked with special care. There is no doubt that our apparatus being what it is, there is bound to be, on the pretext of unity in the railway service, unity in the fiscal service and so on, a mass of truly Russian abuses. Special ingenuity is necessary for the struggle against

these abuses, not to mention special sincerity on the part of those who undertake this struggle. A detailed code will be required, and only the nationals living in the republic in question can draw it up at all successfully. And then we cannot be sure in advance that as a result of this work we shall not take a step backward at our next Congress of Soviets, i.e., retain the union of Soviet socialist republics only for military and diplomatic affairs, and in all other respects restore full independence to the individual People's Commissariats.

It must be borne in mind that the decentralisation of the People's Commissariats and the lack of co-ordination in their work as far as Moscow and other centres are concerned can be compensated sufficiently by Party authority, if it is exercised with sufficient prudence and impartiality; the harm that can result to our state from a lack of unification between the national apparatuses and the Russian apparatus is infinitely less than that which will be done not only to us, but to the whole International, and to the hundreds of millions of the peoples of Asia, which is destined to follow us on to the stage of history in the near future. It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, even if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities. The need to rally against the imperialists of the West, who are defending the capitalist world, is one thing. There can be no doubt about that and it would be superfluous for me to speak about my unconditional approval of it. It is another thing when we ourselves lapse, even if only in trifles, into imperialist attitudes towards oppressed nationalities, thus undermining all our principled sincerity, all our principled defence of the struggle against imperialism. But the morrow of world history will be a day when the awakening peoples oppressed by imperialism are finally aroused and the decisive long and hard struggle for their liberation begins.

LENIN

December 31, 1922

Taken down by M. V.

*Collected Works*, Vol. 36, pp. 605-11

## Pages from a Diary

The recent publication of the report on literacy among the population of Russia, based on the census of 1920 (*Literacy in Russia*, issued by the Central Statistical Board, Public Education Section, Moscow, 1922), is a very important event.

Below I quote a table from this report on the state of literacy among the population of Russia in 1897 and 1920.

	Literates per thousand males		Literates per thousand females		Literates per thousand population	
	1897	1920	1897	1920	1897	1920
1. European Russia . . . . .	326	422	136	255	229	330
2. North Caucasus . . . . .	241	357	56	215	150	281
3. Siberia (Western) . . . . .	170	307	46	134	108	218
Overall average . . . . .	318	409	131	244	223	319

At a time when we hold forth on proletarian culture and the relation in which it stands to bourgeois culture, facts and figures reveal that we are in a very bad way even as far as bourgeois culture is concerned. As might have been expected, it appears that we are still a very long way from attaining universal literacy, and that even compared with tsarist times (1897) our progress has been far too slow. This

should serve as a stern warning and reproach to those who have been soaring in the empyreal heights of "proletarian culture". It shows what a vast amount of urgent spade-work we still have to do to reach the standard of an ordinary West-European civilised country. It also shows what a vast amount of work we have to do today to achieve, on the basis of our proletarian gains, anything like a real cultural standard.

We must not confine ourselves to this incontrovertible but too theoretical proposition. The very next time we revise our quarterly budget we must take this matter up in a practical way as well. In the first place, of course, we shall have to cut down the expenditure of government departments other than the People's Commissariat of Education, and the sums thus released should be assigned for the latter's needs. In a year like the present, when we are relatively well supplied, we must not be chary in increasing the bread ration for schoolteachers.

Generally speaking, it cannot be said that the work now being done in public education is too narrow. Quite a lot is being done to get the old teachers out of their rut, to attract them to the new problems, to rouse their interest in new methods of education, and in such problems as religion.

But we are not doing the main thing. We are not doing anything—or doing far from enough—to raise the schoolteacher to the level that is absolutely essential if we want any culture at all, proletarian or even bourgeois. We must bear in mind the semi-Asiatic ignorance from which we have not yet extricated ourselves, and from which we cannot extricate ourselves without strenuous effort—although we have every opportunity to do so, because nowhere are the masses of the people so interested in real culture as they are in our country; nowhere are the problems of this culture tackled so thoroughly and consistently as they are in our country; in no other country is state power in the hands of the working class which, in its mass, is fully aware of the deficiencies, I shall not say of its culture, but of its literacy; no-

where is the working class so ready to make, and nowhere is it actually making, such sacrifices to improve its position in this respect as in our country.

Too little, far too little, is still being done by us to adjust our state budget to satisfy, as a first measure, the requirements of elementary public education. Even in our People's Commissariat of Education we all too often find disgracefully inflated staffs in some state publishing establishment, which is contrary to the concept that the state's first concern should not be publishing houses but that there should be people to read, that the number of people able to read is greater, so that book publishing should have a wider political field in future Russia. Owing to the old (and bad) habit, we are still devoting much more time and effort to technical questions, such as the question of book publishing, than to the general political question of literacy among the people.

If we take the Central Vocational Education Board, we are sure that there, too, we shall find far too much that is superfluous and inflated by departmental interests, much that is ill-adjusted to the requirements of broad public education. Far from everything that we find in the Central Vocational Education Board can be justified by the legitimate desire first of all to improve and give a practical slant to the education of our young factory workers. If we examine the staff of the Central Vocational Education Board carefully we shall find very much that is inflated and is in that respect fictitious and should be done away with. There is still very much in the proletarian and peasant state that can and must be economised for the purpose of promoting literacy among the people; this can be done by closing institutions which are playthings of a semi-aristocratic type, or institutions we can still do without and will be able to do without, and shall have to do without, for a long time to come, considering the state of literacy among the people as revealed by the statistics.

Our schoolteacher should be raised to a standard he has never achieved, and cannot achieve, in bourgeois society.

This is a truism and requires no proof. We must strive for this state of affairs by working steadily, methodically and persistently to raise the teacher to a higher cultural level, to train him thoroughly for his really high calling and—mainly, mainly and mainly—to improve his position materially.

We must systematically step up our efforts to organise the schoolteachers so as to transform them from the bulwark of the bourgeois system that they still are in all capitalist countries without exception, into the bulwark of the Soviet system, in order, through their agency, to divert the peasantry from alliance with the bourgeoisie and to bring them into alliance with the proletariat.

I want briefly to emphasise the special importance in this respect of regular visits to the villages; such visits, it is true, are already being practised and should be regularly promoted. We should not stint money—which we all too often waste on the machinery of state that is almost entirely a product of the past historical epoch—on measures like these visits to the villages.

For the speech I was to have delivered at the Congress of Soviets in December 1922 I collected data on the patronage undertaken by urban workers over villagers. Part of these data was obtained for me by Comrade Khodorovsky, and since I have been unable to deal with this problem and give it publicity through the Congress, I submit the matter to the comrades for discussion now.

Here we have a fundamental political question—the relations between town and country—which is of decisive importance for the whole of our revolution. While the bourgeois state methodically concentrates all its efforts on doping the urban workers, adapting all the literature published at state expense and at the expense of the tsarist and bourgeois parties for this purpose, we can and must utilise our political power to make the urban worker an effective vehicle of communist ideas among the rural proletariat.

I said “communist”, but I hasten to make a reservation for fear of causing a misunderstanding, or of being taken too

literally. Under no circumstances must this be understood to mean that we should immediately propagate purely and strictly communist ideas in the countryside. As long as our countryside lacks the material basis for communism, it will be, I should say, harmful, in fact, I should say, fatal, for communism to do so.

That is a fact. We must start by establishing contacts between town and country without the preconceived aim of implanting communism in the rural districts. It is an aim which cannot be achieved at the present time. It is inopportune, and to set an aim like that at the present time would be harmful, instead of useful, to the cause.

But it is our duty to establish contacts between the urban workers and the rural working people, to establish between them a form of comradeship which can easily be created. This is one of the fundamental tasks of the working class which holds power. To achieve this we must form a number of associations (Party, trade union and private) of factory workers, which would devote themselves regularly to assisting the villages in their cultural development.

Is it possible to "attach" all the urban groups to all the village groups, so that every working-class group may take advantage regularly of every opportunity, of every occasion to serve the cultural needs of the village group it is "attached" to? Or will it be possible to find other forms of contact? I here confine myself solely to formulating the question in order to draw the comrades' attention to it, to point out the available experience of Western Siberia (to which Comrade Khodorovsky drew my attention) and to present this gigantic, historic cultural task in all its magnitude.

We are doing almost nothing for the rural districts outside our official budget or outside official channels. True, in our country the nature of the cultural relations between town and village is automatically and inevitably changing. Under capitalism the town introduced political, economic, moral, physical, etc., corruption into the countryside. In our case, towns are automatically beginning to introduce the very

opposite of this into the countryside. But, I repeat, all this is going on automatically, spontaneously, and can be improved (and later increased a hundredfold) by doing it consciously, methodically and systematically.

We shall begin to advance (and shall then surely advance a hundred times more quickly) only after we have studied the question, after we have formed all sorts of workers' organisations—doing everything to prevent them from becoming bureaucratic—to take up the matter, discuss it and get things done.

January 2, 1923

*Pravda* No. 2,  
January 4, 1923

*Collected Works*, Vol. 33,  
pp. 462-66



## On Co-operation

### I

It seems to me that not enough attention is being paid to the co-operative movement in our country. Not everyone understands that now, since the time of the October Revolution and quite apart from NEP (on the contrary, in this connection we must say—because of NEP), our co-operative movement has become one of great significance. There is a lot of fantasy in the dreams of the old co-operators. Often they are ridiculously fantastic. But why are they fantastic? Because people do not understand the fundamental, the rock-bottom significance of the working-class political struggle for the overthrow of the rule of the exploiters. We have overthrown the rule of the exploiters, and much that was fantastic, even romantic, even banal in the dreams of the old co-operators is now becoming unvarnished reality.

Indeed, since political power is in the hands of the working class, since this political power owns all the means of production, the only task, indeed, that remains for us is to organise the population in co-operative societies. With most of the population organised in co-operatives, the socialism which in the past was legitimately treated with ridicule, scorn and contempt by those who were rightly convinced that it was necessary to wage the class struggle, the struggle for political power, etc., will achieve its aim automatically. But not all comrades realise how vastly, how infinitely important it is now to organise the population of Russia in co-operative societies. By adopting NEP we made a concession to the peasant as a trader, to the principle of private trade; it is precisely for this reason (contrary to what some people think) that the co-operative movement is of such immense

importance. All we actually need under NEP is to organise the population of Russia in co-operative societies on a sufficiently large scale, for we have now found that degree of combination of private interest, of private commercial interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the common interests which was formerly the stumbling-block for very many socialists. Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc.—is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of co-operatives, out of co-operatives alone, which we formerly ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society? It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it.

It is this very circumstance that is underestimated by many of our practical workers. They look down upon our co-operative societies, failing to appreciate their exceptional importance, first, from the standpoint of principle (the means of production are owned by the state), and, second, from the standpoint of transition to the new system by means that are the *simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant*.

But this again is of fundamental importance. It is one thing to draw up fantastic plans for building socialism through all sorts of workers' associations, and quite another to learn to build socialism in practice in such a way that *every* small peasant could take part in it. That is the very stage we have now reached. And there is no doubt that, having reached it, we are taking too little advantage of it.

We went too far when we introduced NEP, but not because we attached too much importance to the principle of free enterprise and trade—we went too far because we lost sight

of the co-operatives, because we now underrate the co-operatives, because we are already beginning to forget the vast importance of the co-operatives from the above two points of view.

I now propose to discuss with the reader what can and must at once be done practically on the basis of this "co-operative" principle. By what means can we, and must we, start at once to develop this "co-operative" principle so that its socialist meaning may be clear to all?

Co-operation must be politically so organised that it will not only generally and always enjoy certain privileges, but that these privileges should be of a purely material nature (a favourable bank-rate, etc.). The co-operatives must be granted state loans that are greater, if only by a little, than the loans we grant to private enterprises, even to heavy industry, etc.

A social system emerges only if it has the financial backing of a definite class. There is no need to mention the hundreds of millions of rubles that the birth of "free" capitalism cost. At present we have to realise that the co-operative system is the social system we must now give more than ordinary assistance, and we must actually give that assistance. But it must be assistance in the real sense of the word, i.e., it will not be enough to interpret it to mean assistance for any kind of co-operative trade; by assistance we must mean aid to co-operative trade in which *really large masses of the population actually take part*. It is certainly a correct form of assistance to give a bonus to peasants who take part in co-operative trade; but the whole point is to verify the nature of this participation, to verify the awareness behind it, and to verify its quality. Strictly speaking, when a co-operator goes to a village and opens a co-operative store, the people take no part in this whatever; but at the same time guided by their own interests they will hasten to try to take part in it.

There is another aspect to this question. From the point of view of the "enlightened" (primarily, literate) European

there is not much left for us to do to induce absolutely everyone to take not a passive, but an active part in co-operative operations. Strictly speaking, there is "only" one thing left for us to do and that is to make our people so "enlightened" that they understand all the advantages of everybody participating in the work of the co-operatives, and organise this participation. "Only" that. There are now no other devices needed to advance to socialism. But to achieve this "only", there must be a veritable revolution—the entire people must go through a period of cultural development. Therefore, our rule must be: as little philosophising and as few acrobatics as possible. In this respect NEP is an advance, because it is adjustable to the level of the most ordinary peasant and does not demand anything higher of him. But it will take a whole historical epoch to get the entire population into the work of the co-operatives through NEP. At best we can achieve this in one or two decades. Nevertheless, it will be a distinct historical epoch, and without this historical epoch, without universal literacy, without a proper degree of efficiency, without training the population sufficiently to acquire the habit of book-reading, and without the material basis for this, without a certain sufficiency to safeguard against, say, bad harvest, famine, etc.—without this we shall not achieve our object. The thing now is to learn to combine the wide revolutionary range of action, the revolutionary enthusiasm which we have displayed, and displayed abundantly, and crowned with complete success—to learn to combine this with (I am almost inclined to say) the ability to be an efficient and capable trader, which is quite enough to be a good co-operator. By ability to be a trader I mean the ability to be a cultured trader. Let those Russians, or peasants, who imagine that since they trade they are good traders, get that well into their heads. This does not follow at all. They do trade, but that is far from being cultured traders. They now trade in an Asiatic manner, but to be a good trader one must trade in the European manner. They are a whole epoch behind in that.

In conclusion: a number of economic, financial and banking privileges must be granted to the co-operatives—this is the way our socialist state must promote the new principle on which the population must be organised. But this is only the general outline of the task; it does not define and depict in detail the entire content of the practical task, i.e., we must find what form of “bonus” to give for joining the co-operatives (and the terms on which we should give it), the form of bonus by which we shall assist the co-operatives sufficiently, the form of bonus that will produce the civilised co-operator. And given social ownership of the means of production, given the class victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, the system of civilised co-operators is the system of socialism.

January 4, 1923

## II

Whenever I wrote about the New Economic Policy I always quoted the article on state capitalism\* which I wrote in 1918. This has more than once aroused doubts in the minds of certain young comrades. But their doubts were mainly on abstract political points.

It seemed to them that the term “state capitalism” could not be applied to a system under which the means of production were owned by the working class, a working class that held political power. They did not notice, however, that I used the term “state capitalism”, *firstly*, to connect historically our present position with the position adopted in my controversy with the so-called Left Communists; also, I argued at the time that state capitalism would be superior to our existing economy. It was important for me to show the continuity between ordinary state capitalism and the

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\* Lenin refers to his article “‘Left-wing’ Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality.”—Ed.

unusual, even very unusual, state capitalism to which I referred in introducing the reader to the New Economic Policy. *Secondly*, the practical purpose was always important to me. And the practical purpose of our New Economic Policy was to lease out concessions. In the prevailing circumstances, concessions in our country would unquestionably have been a pure type of state capitalism. That is how I argued about state capitalism.

But there is another aspect of the matter for which we may need state capitalism, or at least a comparison with it. It is the question of co-operatives.

In the capitalist state, co-operatives are no doubt collective capitalist institutions. Nor is there any doubt that under our present economic conditions, when we combine private capitalist enterprises—but in no other way than on nationalised land and in no other way than under the control of the working-class state—with enterprises of a consistently socialist type (the means of production, the land on which the enterprises are situated, and the enterprises as a whole belonging to the state), the question arises about a third type of enterprise, the co-operatives, which were not formerly regarded as an independent type differing fundamentally from the others. Under private capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from capitalist enterprises as collective enterprises differ from private enterprises. Under state capitalism, co-operative enterprises differ from state capitalist enterprises, firstly, because they are private enterprises, and, secondly, because they are collective enterprises. Under our present system, co-operative enterprises differ from private capitalist enterprises because they are collective enterprises, but do not differ from socialist enterprises if the land on which they are situated and the means of production belong to the state, i.e., the working class.

This circumstance is not considered sufficiently when co-operatives are discussed. It is forgotten that owing to the special features of our political system, our co-operatives

acquire an altogether exceptional significance. If we exclude concessions, which, incidentally, have not developed on any considerable scale, co-operation under our conditions nearly always coincides fully with socialism.

Let me explain what I mean. Why were the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onwards, fantastic? Because they dreamed of peacefully remodelling contemporary society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental questions as the class struggle, the capture of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding as entirely fantastic this "co-operative" socialism, and as romantic, and even banal, the dream of transforming class enemies into class collaborators and class war into class peace (so-called class truce) by merely organising the population in co-operative societies.

Undoubtedly we were right from the point of view of the fundamental task of the present day, for socialism cannot be established without a class struggle for political power in the state.

But see how things have changed now that political power is in the hands of the working class, now that the political power of the exploiters is overthrown and all the means of production (except those which the workers' state voluntarily abandons on specified terms and for a certain time to the exploiters in the form of concessions) are owned by the working class.

Now we are entitled to say that for us the mere growth of co-operation (with the "slight" exception mentioned above) is identical with the growth of socialism, and at the same time we have to admit that there has been a radical modification in our whole outlook on socialism. The radical modification is this: formerly we placed, and had to place, the main emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning political power, etc. Now the emphasis is changing and shifting to peaceful, organisational, "cultural" work. I should say that emphasis is shifting to educational work,

were it not for our international relations, were it not for the fact that we have to fight for our position on a world scale. If we leave that aside, however, and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the emphasis in our work is certainly shifting to education.

Two main tasks confront us, which constitute the epoch—to reorganise our machinery of state, which is utterly useless, and which we took over in its entirety from the preceding epoch; during the past five years of struggle we did not, and could not, drastically reorganise it. Our second task is educational work among the peasants. And the economic object of this educational work among the peasants is to organise the latter in co-operative societies. If the whole of the peasantry had been organised in co-operatives, we would by now have been standing with both feet on the soil of socialism. But the organisation of the entire peasantry in co-operative societies presupposes a standard of culture among the peasants (precisely among the peasants as the overwhelming mass) that cannot, in fact, be achieved without a cultural revolution.

Our opponents told us repeatedly that we were rash in undertaking to implant socialism in an insufficiently cultured country. But they were misled by our having started from the opposite end to that prescribed by theory (the theory of pedants of all kinds), because in our country the political and social revolution preceded the cultural revolution, that very cultural revolution which nevertheless now confronts us.

This cultural revolution would now suffice to make our country a completely socialist country; but it presents immense difficulties of a purely cultural (for we are illiterate) and material character (for to be cultured we must achieve a certain development of the material means of production, must have a certain material base).

January 6, 1923

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## Our Revolution

(*Apropos of N. Sukhanov's Notes*)\*

### I

I have lately been glancing through Sukhanov's notes on the revolution. What strikes one most is the pedantry of all our petty-bourgeois democrats and of all the heroes of the Second International. Apart from the fact that they are all extremely faint-hearted, that when it comes to the minutest deviation from the German model even the best of them fortify themselves with reservations—apart from this characteristic, which is common to all petty-bourgeois democrats and has been abundantly manifested by them throughout the revolution, what strikes one is their slavish imitation of the past.

They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility\*\* is demanded, and have even failed to notice, for instance, the statements Marx made in his letters—I think it was in 1856—expressing the hope of combining a peasant war in Germany, which might create

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\* Lenin wrote this article on the third and fourth books of the *Notes on the Revolution* by the Menshevik N. Sukhanov.—Ed.

\*\* This is evidently a reference to the description of the Paris Commune as a supremely flexible political system in Marx's *The Civil War in France* and the high appraisal of the "flexibility of the Parisians" given by Marx in his letter to L. Kugelmann of April 12, 1871.—Ed.

a revolutionary situation, with the working-class movement\*—they avoid even this plain statement and walk round and about it like a cat around a bowl of hot porridge.

Their conduct betrays them as cowardly reformists who are afraid to deviate from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they disguise their cowardice with the wildest rhetoric and braggartry. But what strikes one in all of them even from the purely theoretical point of view is their utter inability to grasp the following Marxist considerations: up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain amendments (quite insignificant from the standpoint of the general development of world history).

*First*—the revolution connected with the first imperialist world war. Such a revolution was bound to reveal new features, or variations, resulting from the war itself, for the world has never seen such a war in such a situation. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have to this day been unable to restore “normal” bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists—petty bourgeois who make a show of being revolutionaries—believed, and still believe, that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far shalt thou go and no farther). And even their conception of “normal” is extremely stereotyped and narrow.

*Secondly*, they are complete strangers to the idea that while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that

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\* Lenin refers to the following passage from Marx's letter to Engels of April 16, 1856: “The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility of backing the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War. Then the affair will be splendid. . . .”—*Ed.*

because Russia stands on the border-line between the civilised countries and the countries which this war has for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilisation—all the Oriental, non-European countries—she could and was, indeed, bound to reveal certain distinguishing features; although these, of course, are in keeping with the general line of world development, they distinguish her revolution from those which took place in the West-European countries and introduce certain partial innovations as the revolution moves on to the countries of the East.

Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain “learned” gentlemen among them put it, the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country. It does not occur to any of them to ask: but what about a people that found itself in a revolutionary situation such as that created during the first imperialist war? Might it not, influenced by the hopelessness of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it at least some chance of securing conditions for the further development of civilisation that were somewhat unusual?

“The development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible.” All the heroes of the Second International, including, of course, Sukhanov, beat the drums about this proposition. They keep harping on this incontrovertible proposition in a thousand different keys, and think that it is the decisive criterion of our revolution.

But what if the situation, which drew Russia into the imperialist world war that involved every more or less influential West-European country and made her a witness of the eve of the revolutions maturing or partly already begun in the East, gave rise to circumstances that put Russia and her development in a position which enabled us to achieve precisely that combination of a “peasant war” with the working-class movement suggested in 1856 by no less a

Marxist than Marx himself as a possible prospect for Prussia?

What if the complete hopelessness of the situation, by stimulating the efforts of the workers and peasants tenfold, offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilisation in a different way from that of the West-European countries? Has that altered the general line of development of world history? Has that altered the basic relations between the basic classes of all the countries that are being, or have been, drawn into the general course of world history?

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite "level of culture" is, for it differs in every West-European country), why cannot we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and *then*, with the aid of the workers' and peasants' government and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations?

January 16, 1923

## II

You say that civilisation is necessary for the building of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civilisation in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical sequence of events are impermissible or impossible?

Napoleon, I think, wrote: "*On s'engage et puis... on voit.*" Rendered freely this means: "First engage in a serious battle and then see what happens." Well, we did first engage in a serious battle in October 1917, and then saw such details of development (from the standpoint of world history they were certainly details) as the Brest peace, the New Economic

Policy, and so forth. And now there can be no doubt that in the main we have been victorious.

Our Sukhanovs, not to mention Social-Democrats still farther to the right, never even dream that revolutions could be made in any other way. Our European philistines never even dream that the subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess much vaster populations and a much vaster diversity of social conditions, will undoubtedly display even greater distinctions than the Russian revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskian lines was a very useful thing in its day. But it is time, for all that, to abandon the idea that it foresaw all the forms of development of subsequent world history. It would be timely to say that those who think so are simply fools.

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## **How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection**

*(Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress)*

It is beyond question that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is an enormous difficulty for us, and that so far this difficulty has not been overcome. I think that the comrades who try to overcome the difficulty by denying that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is useful and necessary are wrong. But I do not deny that the problem presented by our state apparatus and the task of improving it is very difficult, that it is far from being solved and is an extremely urgent one.

With the exception of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change. It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all other respects it is a most typical relic of our old state machine. And so, to find a method of really renovating it, I think we ought to turn for experience to our Civil War.

How did we act in the more critical moments of the Civil War?

We concentrated our best Party forces in the Red Army; we mobilised the best of our workers; we looked for new forces at the deepest roots of our dictatorship.

I am convinced that we must go to the same source to find the means of reorganising the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I recommend that our Twelfth Party Congress adopt the

following plan of reorganisation, based on some enlargement of our Central Control Commission.

The Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee of our Party are already revealing a tendency to develop into a kind of supreme Party conference. They take place, on the average, not more than once in two months, while the routine work is conducted, as we know, on behalf of the Central Committee by our Political Bureau, our Organising Bureau, our Secretariat, and so forth. I think we ought to follow the road we have thus taken to the end and definitely transform the Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee into supreme Party conferences convened once in two months jointly with the Central Control Commission. The Central Control Commission should be amalgamated with the main body of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on the following lines.

I propose that the Congress should elect 75 to 100 new members to the Central Control Commission. They should be workers and peasants, and should go through the same Party screening as ordinary members of the Central Committee, because they are to enjoy the same rights as the members of the Central Committee.

On the other hand, the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be reduced to three or four hundred persons, specially screened for conscientiousness and knowledge of our state apparatus. They must also undergo a special test as regards their knowledge of the principles of scientific organisation of labour in general, and of administrative work, office work, and so forth, in particular.

In my opinion, such an amalgamation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with the Central Control Commission will be beneficial to both these institutions. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will thus obtain such high authority that it will certainly not be inferior to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, our Central Committee, together with the Central Control

Commission, will definitely take the road of becoming a supreme Party conference, which in fact it has already taken, and along which it should proceed to the end so as to be able to fulfil its functions properly in two respects: in respect to *its own* methodical, expedient and systematic organisation and work, and in respect to maintaining contacts with the broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants.

I foresee an objection that, directly or indirectly, may come from those spheres which make our state apparatus antiquated, i.e., from those who urge that its present utterly impossible, indecently pre-revolutionary form be preserved (incidentally, we now have an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years, and what requires much more time).

The objection I foresee is that the change I propose will lead to nothing but chaos. The members of the Central Control Commission will wander around all the institutions, not knowing where, why or to whom to apply, causing disorganisation everywhere and distracting employees from their routine work, etc., etc.

I think that the malicious source of this objection is so obvious that it does not warrant a reply. It goes without saying that the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and his collegium (and also, in the proper cases, the Secretariat of our Central Committee) will have to put in years of persistent effort to get the Commissariat properly organised, and to get it to function smoothly in conjunction with the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, as well as the whole collegium, can (and should) remain and guide the work of the entire Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, including the work of all the members of the Central Control Commission who will be "placed under his



command". The three or four hundred employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection that are to remain, according to my plan, should, on the one hand, perform purely secretarial functions for the other members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and for the supplementary members of the Central Control Commission; and, on the other hand, they should be highly skilled, specially screened, particularly reliable, and highly paid, so that they may be relieved of their present truly unhappy (to say the least) position of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection officials.

I am sure that the reduction of the staff to the number I have indicated will greatly enhance the efficiency of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection personnel and the quality of all its work, enabling the People's Commissar and the members of the collegium to concentrate their efforts entirely on organising work and on systematically and steadily improving its efficiency, which is so absolutely essential for our workers' and peasants' government, and for our Soviet system.

On the other hand, I also think that the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should work on partly amalgamating and partly co-ordinating those higher institutions for the organisation of labour (the Central Institute of Labour, the Institute for the Scientific Organisation of Labour, etc.), of which there are now no fewer than twelve in our Republic. Excessive uniformity and a consequent desire to amalgamate will be harmful. On the contrary, what is needed here is a reasonable and expedient mean between amalgamating all these institutions and properly delimiting them, allowing for a certain independence for each of them.

Our own Central Committee will undoubtedly gain no less from this reorganisation than the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. It will gain because its contacts with the masses will be greater and because the regularity and effectiveness of its work will improve. It will then be possible (and necessary) to institute a stricter and more responsible procedure

of preparing for the meetings of the Political Bureau, which should be attended by a definite number of members of the Central Control Commission determined either for a definite period or by some organisational plan.

In distributing work to the members of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, in conjunction with the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, should impose on them the duty either of attending the meetings of the Political Bureau for the purpose of examining all the documents appertaining to matters that come before it in one way or another; or of devoting their working time to theoretical study, to the study of scientific methods of organising labour; or of taking a practical part in the work of supervising and improving our machinery of state, from the higher state institutions to the lower local bodies, etc.

I also think that in addition to the political advantages accruing from the fact that the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission will, as a consequence of this reform, be much better informed and better prepared for the meetings of the Political Bureau (all the documents relevant to the business to be discussed at these meetings should be sent to all the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission not later than the day before the meeting of the Political Bureau, except in absolutely urgent cases, for which special methods of informing the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and of settling these matters must be devised), there will also be the advantage that the influence of purely personal and incidental factors in our Central Committee will diminish, and this will reduce the danger of a split.

Our Central Committee has grown into a strictly centralised and highly authoritative group, but the conditions under which this group is working are not commensurate with its authority. The reform I recommend should help to remove this defect, and the members of the Central Control

Commission, whose duty it will be to attend all meetings of the Political Bureau in a definite number, will have to form a compact group which should not allow anybody's authority without exception, neither that of the General Secretary nor of any other member of the Central Committee, to prevent them from putting questions, verifying documents, and, in general, from keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs.

Of course, in our Soviet Republic, the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the "Nepmen", i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate on certain terms. If serious class disagreements arise between these classes, a split will be inevitable. But the grounds for such a split are not inevitable in our social system, and it is the principal task of our Central Committee and Central Control Commission, as well as of our Party as a whole, to watch very closely over such circumstances as may cause a split, and to forestall them, for in the final analysis the fate of our Republic will depend on whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they will permit the "Nepmen", i.e., the new bourgeoisie, to drive a wedge between them and the working class, to split them off from the working class. The more clearly we see this alternative, the more clearly all our workers and peasants understand it, the greater are the chances that we shall avoid a split, which would be fatal for the Soviet Republic.

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## **Better Fewer, but Better**

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organisation, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and scepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture. For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i.e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harmful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the

past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a culture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such breakneck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound scepticism for too rapid progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigour, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have elements of

knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set out, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly, to learn, and then see to it that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catch-phrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not make the demands that are made by bourgeois Western Europe, but demands that are fit and proper for a country which has set out to develop into a socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a really exemplary institution, an instrument to improve our state apparatus.

In order that it may attain the desired high level, we must follow the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut."

For this purpose, we must utilise the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilise it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge, to build up the new People's Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements that we have in our social system—such as, first, the advanced workers, and, second, the really enlightened elements for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience—should not shrink from admitting any difficulty and should not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle, which has

proved useless in these five years, or even futile, or even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something, but in effect it was only clogging up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: Better fewer, but better. We must follow the rule: Better get good human material in two or even three years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all.

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be put up, that devilish persistence will be required, that in the first few years at least work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim; and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist, and so on, and so forth.

Many readers probably thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, i.e., our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think that the time has at last come when we must work in real earnest to improve our state apparatus and in this there can scarcely be anything more harmful than haste. That is why I would sound a strong warning against inflating the figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be especially sparing with figures in this matter. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the slightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organised than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have

this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to create within a few years an institution that will, first, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a highly placed institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must immediately and irrevocably reject all general figures for the size of office staffs. We must select employees for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with particular care and only on the basis of the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissariat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confidence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction that we now have in mind is to avoid all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, there must be a definite number of secretaries to assist in this work, who must be put to a triple test before they are appointed to their posts. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept directly as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements:

First, they must be recommended by several Communists.

Second, they must pass a test for knowledge of our state apparatus.

Third, they must pass a test in the fundamentals of the theory of our state apparatus, in the fundamentals of management, office routine, etc.

Fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own secretariat that we could vouch for the work of the whole apparatus.

I know that these requirements are extraordinarily strict, and I am very much afraid that the majority of the "practi-



cal" workers in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will say that these requirements are impracticable, or will scoff at them. But I ask any of the present chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or anyone associated with that body, whether they can honestly tell me the practical purpose of a People's Commissariat like the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I think this question will help them recover their sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while having another of the numerous reorganisations that we have had of this hopeless affair, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we do not arm ourselves with patience, if we do not devote several years to this task, we had better not tackle it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select a minimum number of the higher labour research institutes, etc., which we have baked so hastily, see whether they are organised properly, and allow them to continue working, but only in a way that conforms to the high standards of modern science and gives us all its benefits. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will be able to perform its functions, to work systematically and steadily on improving our state apparatus, an institution backed by the trust of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and the whole population of our Republic.

The spade-work for this could be begun at once. If the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganisation, it could now take preparatory steps and work methodically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has already been done.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this matter. A measure for the size of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what has already been condemned, universally ridiculed, etc.

In substance, the matter is as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learned something about state organisation (we ought to have learned something in five years), or we prove that we are not sufficiently mature for it. If the latter is the case, we had better not tackle the task.

I think that with the available human material it will not be immodest to assume that we have learned enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least one People's Commissariat. True, this one People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state apparatus.

We ought at once to announce a contest in the compilation of two or more textbooks on the organisation of labour in general, and on management in particular. We can take as a basis the book already published by Yermansky, although it should be said in parentheses that he obviously sympathises with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks for the Soviet system. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev, and some of the other partial textbooks available may be useful too.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to Britain, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention Britain in case it is found impossible to send people to the U.S.A. or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary programme of examinations for prospective employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; ditto for candidates to the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar or the collegium of

the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for membership of the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet higher schools. It would hardly be right to exclude one or another category beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, and dissimilar merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials, say, or for it to exclude people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal quality is sociability or the ability to penetrate into circles that are not altogether customary for officials in this field, etc.

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I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of academic institutions. Under the guidance of their Presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. Moreover, they should divide their time correctly between various jobs in investigating the routine in our institutions, from the very small and privately-owned offices to the highest state institutions. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, i.e., the theory of organisation of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organisation of labour.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare themselves for work which I would not

hesitate to call training to catch, I will not say rogues, but something like that, and working out special ruses to screen their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West-European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that we should delve into them by means of ruses, by means of investigations sometimes directed to rather remote sources or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing-stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderie*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in institutes for the higher organisation of labour, etc., I did not by any means imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, nor did I confine myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to include resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and earnest states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become as bureaucratic as all that and that in our midst the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous or semi-humorous trick to expose something ridiculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous, semi-harmful, etc.?

It seems to me that our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will gain a great deal if it undertakes to examine these ideas, and that the list of cases in which our Central Control Commission and its colleagues in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved a few of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Central Control Commission members in places not quite mentionable in prim and staid textbooks.

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How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I do not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where it was brought about at the very beginning? Does not the Political Bureau discuss from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate

(in fact, I think it will be much more appropriate) for our state apparatus as a whole. The functions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our state apparatus as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institution without exception: local, central, commercial, purely administrative, educational, archive, theatrical, etc.—in short, all without any exception.

Why then should not an institution, whose activities have such wide scope, and which moreover requires such extraordinary flexibility of forms, be permitted to adopt this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. What is more, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise in the dustiest corners of our government offices, and that they deserve to be treated with nothing but ridicule.

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Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West-European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who counted on being able again and again to fish in the muddy waters of these prejudices. And they did fish in these muddy waters to so great an extent that only the blind among us failed to see how extensively this fishing was practised.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are "frightfully" revolutionary. But as regards precedence, the observance of the forms and rites of office management, our "revolutionariness" often gives way to the mustiest routine. On more than one occasion, we have wit-

nessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity whenever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in a field which was long reserved for theoretical study, which was promoted mainly, and even almost exclusively, in theory. The Russian, when away from work, found solace from bleak bureaucratic realities in unusually bold theoretical constructions, and that is why in our country these unusually bold theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character. Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. Some great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time the imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform in office routine; the imagination, or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general propositions that produced such brilliant results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our present life reckless audacity goes hand in hand, to an astonishing degree, with timidity of thought even when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this has happened in all really great revolutions, for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards developing the old, and the very abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution, the longer will many of these contradictions last.

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The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed

proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labour productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilise the elements of the Civil War in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant



though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of "class truce".

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc., have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question—shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, until the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual "maturing" of socialism, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers' government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist devel-

opment, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and preventing her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite as they did the first time, when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries of the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and the U.S.A.?

I think the reply to this question should be that the issue depends upon too many factors, and that the outcome of the struggle as a whole can be forecast only because in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Govern-

ment, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilised countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, however, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilised. We, too, lack enough civilisation to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership of the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine.

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project, etc.

In this, and in this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of an economy designed for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and must seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of the Volkhov Power Station, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspec-

tion. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be certain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

March 2, 1923

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## GLOSSARY\*

### A

*Anarchism*—an ideological and political trend which grew up in the mid-19th century and spread mainly in Spain, France and Italy. Its founders and ideologists were Pierre J. Proudhon (1809-1865) and Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876).

Its characteristic features are as follows: hostile attitude to the state and state authority, adherence to the view that the state can be "abolished" at once; renunciation of political activity and political struggle; a conviction that it is possible to achieve a transition of society to some ideal "stateless" condition merely through spontaneous revolts and a general strike. Being opponents of the theory of scientific socialism, anarchists come out against socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Extreme individualism is a specific feature of anarchism. Anarchism is an expression of the moods of the petty bourgeoisie that is being ruined under capitalism, easily changes ultra-revolutionary views for reactionary ones and is incapable of consistent, scientifically substantiated struggle for the abolition of the capitalist system. During the First World War (1914-1918) prominent anarchist leaders (Kropotkin, Jean Grave and others) came out in support of their own imperialist governments and thus became supporters of the imperialist war.

*Anarcho-syndicalism*—a Left-opportunist trend which grew up at the end of the 19th century and soon became widespread mainly among the trade union leaders of France and other Romance countries. Its ideologists were Georges Sorel and Hubert Lagardelle. The anarcho-syndicalists advocated non-participation in political struggle, upheld the idea of the "neutrality" of trade unions and rejected the need for the working-class party to exercise influence on the trade

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\* The reader will find here information on parties, political trends, periodicals and important events referred to in the book.

unions. They regarded general strike as a means for abolishing the capitalist system. During the First World War (1914-1918) the majority of anarcho-syndicalist leaders adopted a social-chauvinist stand. In Russia this trend was represented in 1920-21 by the Workers' Opposition led by A. M. Kollontai and A. G. Shlyapnikov.

The *Anti-Socialist Law* was passed in Germany by the Bismarck Government in 1878. The law banned the Social-Democratic Party, all mass labour organisations and the working-class press. The finest section of the German Social-Democrats rallied behind August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht and began underground work on a large scale, hence the Party's influence on the masses, far from diminishing, continued to grow. During the elections to the Reichstag in 1890 the Social-Democrats won nearly a million and a half votes. The same year the government had to repeal this law.

The *August 1912 Conference*—a conference of Trotskyists, liquidators and other opportunist groups convened in Vienna. It was attended by the delegates of the St. Petersburg and Moscow "promotion groups" of liquidators, of the Bund and the Transcaucasian Mensheviks. The majority of participants represented groups abroad divorced from the workers' movement of Russia: Trotsky's Vienna *Pravda*, the *Uperyod* group and others. The sponsors of the conference aimed at uniting these heterogeneous elements into an opportunist party. They failed to achieve this aim—the representatives of the *Uperyod* group, the Latvian Social-Democrats and some other delegates withdrew from the conference. The conference adopted opportunist resolutions on all the questions discussed and formed the August bloc to combat Bolshevism.

## B

*Bakuninism*—an anarchist trend named after its founder Mikhail Bakunin (1814-1876). Bakuninists renounced political struggle, exaggerated the importance of spontaneous revolt and proposed to "let loose anarchy" and "abolish" the state and state power. They waged a struggle against the theory of scientific socialism. After having joined the International Working Men's Association (the First International) founded by Marx and Engels, Bakunin and his supporters formed a secret society within it—the Social-Democratic Alliance—with the aim of splitting the International. The subversive activity of the Alliance was exposed and the Bakuninists were expelled from the International Working Men's Association at the Hague Congress in 1872. The attempts of the Bakuninists to put their ideas into practice in Spain during the Spanish revolution

of 1873 and in Italy in 1874 ended in fiasco and demonstrated the complete untenability of the theory and practice of anarchism.

The *Basle Congress*—see The *Basle Manifesto*.

The *Basle Manifesto*. In November 1912 the Extraordinary International Socialist Congress was held in Basle. It expressed a protest against the Balkan War and preparations then in progress for an imperialist world war. The Congress adopted a resolution (Manifesto) which called upon the socialists of all countries "to prevent the war".

"The latter [the proletariat—*Ed.*] consider it a crime to shoot each other down in the interests and for the profit of capitalism, for the sake of dynastic honour and of diplomatic secret treaties." "In case war should break out notwithstanding, they [socialists—*Ed.*] shall be bound to intervene for its being brought to a speedy end, and to employ all their forces for utilising the economic and political crisis created by the war, in order to rouse the masses of people and to hasten the downbreak of the capitalist class."

When in 1914 the world war broke out the majority of the leaders of the Socialist Parties affiliated to the Second International betrayed the cause of socialism and went over to the side of their imperialist governments, refusing to abide by the *Basle Manifesto*. The Russian Bolsheviks led by Lenin, the German Left-wing Social-Democrats including Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, and some groups in other socialist parties remained faithful to the principles of internationalism and, in keeping with the *Basle Manifesto*, called upon the workers of their countries to fight against their imperialist governments and against the imperialist war.

The *Berne Conference*—a conference of the R.S.D.L.P. groups abroad held from February 27 to March 4, 1915. It was called on the initiative of Lenin and ranked as an all-Party Bolshevik conference because during the war it was impossible to convene an all-Russia conference. The Conference was attended by representatives of the Paris, Zurich, Geneva, Berne, Lausanne and London Bolshevik groups as well as the Baugy group. At the Conference Lenin represented the Central Committee and the Party's Central Organ (*Sotsial-Demokrat*), directed the work of the Conference and delivered a report on the main item on the agenda—"The War and the Tasks of the Party". The Conference adopted the anti-war resolutions written by Lenin.

The *Berne International*—an international organisation of opportunist socialist parties formed at a congress in Berne in February 1919 with the object of re-establishing the Second International that had split up in 1914.

*Bernsteinism*—revisionism, an anti-Marxist trend in German and international Social-Democracy that took shape at the end of the

nineteenth century and derived its name from the German Social-Democrat Eduard Bernstein.

In 1896-98 Bernstein published a series of articles "Problems of Socialism" in the German Social-Democratic theoretical journal *Die Neue Zeit*. In these articles, under the flag of "freedom of criticism", he set out to revise the philosophical, economic and political principles of revolutionary Marxism and to substitute in their place bourgeois theories of "class peace" and class collaboration. Bernstein came out against Marx's teachings on the inevitable downfall of capitalism, on socialist revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and suggested that the working class should confine itself to demanding separate reforms within the framework of capitalist society. Bernstein's motto was "the movement is everything, the final aim is nothing". Bernstein enjoyed the support of the German Right-wing Social-Democrats and opportunist elements in other parties of the Second International.

At the congresses of the German Social-Democratic Party in Stuttgart (October 1898), Hannover (October 1899) and Lübeck (September 1901) Bernsteinism was condemned but the Party did not dissociate itself resolutely enough from Bernstein, hence Bernstein and his followers continued to advocate revisionist views.

**Black Hundreds**—monarchist gangs organised by the tsarist police to combat the revolutionary movement. They assassinated revolutionaries, assaulted progressive intellectuals and organised pogroms against the Jews.

**Blanquism**—a revolutionary trend in France in the 19th century headed by the French revolutionary and socialist, Louis Auguste Blanqui (1805-1881). The Blanquists waged a struggle against the bourgeois governments in France, organised secret societies and repeatedly attempted to stir up a revolt. The weak aspects of Blanquism were its conspiratorial tactics and underestimation of the need to enlist the masses in the revolutionary struggle. The Blanquists, Lenin wrote, expected "that mankind will be emancipated from wage slavery, not by the proletarian class struggle, but through a conspiracy hatched by a small minority of intellectuals". The Blanquists formed the Left wing of the Paris Commune (March-May 1871). After the defeat of the Paris Commune some of the Blanquists emigrated to England where they took part in the work of the General Council of the International Working Men's Association. In 1901 they joined the Socialist Party of France.

**The Bolshevik group in the Fourth Duma.** When the First World War broke out the Bolshevik deputies to the Duma, namely, A. Y. Baidayev, M. K. Muranov, G. I. Petrovsky, F. N. Samoilov and N. R. Shagov, refused to vote in support of war credits for the tsarist government. They exposed the antipopular, imperialist



character of the war and called upon the workers to wage struggle against the war and tsarism. For revolutionary activities these five Bolshevik deputies were brought to trial and sentenced to exile in Eastern Siberia.

*Brentanoism*—a bourgeois reformist trend originated by Lujo Brentano, Professor of political economy at Munich University (1844-1931). He was an opponent of Karl Marx's revolutionary theory and maintained that it was possible to eliminate the contradictions of capitalist society by reforms and factory legislation. He advocated "class peace" and "reconciliation" between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The *British Socialist Party* (B.S.P.) was founded in Manchester in 1911 by the fusion of the Social-Democratic Party (called the Social-Democratic Federation up to 1907) and other socialist groups. The B.S.P. conducted propaganda in a Marxist spirit and was a party that was "not opportunist, and was really independent of the Liberals". During the First World War a sharp struggle developed in the party between the internationalist trend (William Gallacher, Albert Inkpin, John Maclean, Theodore Rothstein and others) and the social-chauvinist trend headed by Hyndman. The annual conference of the B.S.P. held in April 1916 in Salford condemned the social-chauvinist position adopted by Hyndman and his supporters, and they left the party. The B.S.P., together with the Communist Unity Group, played a leading part in the founding of the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1920.

*Broussists*—see *Possibilism*.

The *Bulygin Duma*—the "advisory representative assembly" which the tsarist government promised to convene in 1905. The bill for its convocation was drafted by a commission presided over by the Minister of the Interior Bulygin. According to the bill the right to vote was to be granted to the landowners, capitalists and an insignificant rich sector of the peasantry. The Bolsheviks proclaimed and carried out an active boycott of the Bulygin Duma—they called upon the population to refrain from taking part in the elections and to carry on the struggle for the overthrow of the autocracy. The Bolsheviks utilised the boycott to mobilise all revolutionary forces, to hold mass political strikes and prepare for an armed uprising. The Bulygin Duma was never convened, it was swept away by the upsurge of the revolutionary movement—the general political strike of October 1905.

The *Bund*—the General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, organised in 1897, whose members were mainly Jewish artisans in the western regions of Russia. It pursued an opportunist, Menshevik policy. It was greatly influenced by the nationalist Jewish bourgeoisie and pursued a policy of isolating Jewish work-

ers from the workers of other nationalities inhabiting Russia. After the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia (October 1917) its leaders joined forces with the counter-revolutionary landowners and bourgeoisie to fight against Soviet power. In 1921 the Bund voluntarily dissolved its organisations.

## C

*The Cadets (Constitutional-Democratic Party)*—the chief party of the liberal bourgeoisie in Russia formed in October 1905. Among the leaders of the Cadets were P. N. Milyukov, A. I. Shingaryov and F. I. Rodichev. The Cadets were in favour of setting up a constitutional monarchy in Russia. During the first Russian revolution of 1905-07 they called themselves the party of "people's freedom", but in fact they betrayed the people's interests and conducted secret negotiations with the tsarist government with the aim of stifling the revolution. Under tsarist rule the Cadets sought to come to power. During the First World War (1914-18) their leaders were ideologists of the aggressive policy pursued by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie. After the February revolution of 1917 the Cadets entered the bourgeois Provisional Government and waged a struggle against the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants, upheld the landed estates and urged the people to continue the imperialist war. After the October Socialist Revolution the Cadets headed the counter-revolutionary forces that waged an armed struggle against Soviet Russia.

*Centrism or Kautskyism*—an opportunist trend in the international working-class movement, whose chief ideologist was Karl Kautsky. The Centrists in the Second International parties took a half-way position between the avowed opportunists and the Left revolutionary wing, hence their name. Under cover of Left phrases the Centrists, on questions of principle, supported the Right wing of Social-Democracy. In the period of revolutionary upsurge in Western Europe between 1919 and 1921 the Centrists in some countries split away from their Social-Democratic parties and, wishing to preserve their influence among the revolutionary-minded masses of workers, declared their decision to join the Communist International. After the defeat of the revolutionary movement in Germany, Italy and other countries, when a period of temporary stabilisation of capitalism set in, the Centrists once again joined their opportunist Social-Democratic parties.

*Chartism*—the first mass revolutionary movement of British workers in the 1830s and 1840s. The Chartists published a petition to Parliament, People's Charter (hence their name), in which they demanded

universal franchise for men over 21, repeal of property qualifications for Parliamentary candidates, etc. Mass meetings and demonstrations involving millions of workers and artisans were held throughout the country for many years. The petition to Parliament drawn up by the Third National Convention of the Chartists in April 1848 was signed by more than five million people.

The British Parliament, which mainly represented the landed aristocracy and the big bourgeoisie, refused to approve the People's Charter and rejected all the Chartists' petitions. The government subjected the Chartists to brutal reprisals and arrested their leaders. The movement was crushed but it had a tremendous influence on the subsequent development of the international working-class movement.

*The Chinese Revolution of 1911-13.* A broad popular movement against the ruling Manchu dynasty spread through China in the spring and summer of 1911. On the night of October 9, 1911, an uprising broke out in Wuchang which was victorious and led to the formation of the provisional revolutionary government. Hankow, Hanyang, Shanghai and a number of other cities and provinces went over to the side of the revolution. Workers, railwaymen, students and the urban poor took an active part in the revolution. The peasant movement was gaining strength—peasants demanded land and abolition of exorbitant taxes and fought the feudal lords and landowners.

The revolutionary movement was led by the Tungmenghui party which united the most democratic sections of the Chinese bourgeoisie—the intelligentsia and the urban petty bourgeoisie—and enjoyed the support of the peasantry.

At the end of December 1911 a conference of delegates from revolutionary provinces was convened in Nanking which proclaimed a Chinese Republic. Sun Yat-sen, a prominent revolutionary and democrat, was appointed Provisional President of the Republic.

In February 1912 the Manchu dynasty renounced its claim to the throne. Liberals representing the powerful bourgeoisie and landowners were afraid of the further growth of the popular movement and strove to put an end to the revolution: they nominated for the presidency an adventurer Yuan Shih-kai who had been in the service of the Manchu dynasty and Sun Yat-sen was obliged to resign from his post in favour of Yuan Shih-kai.

After receiving a loan from Russia, Britain and other imperialist states in the spring of 1913, Yuan Shih-kai used it to suppress the revolution and strengthen the counter-revolutionary forces.

In the summer of 1913 the revolutionary forces headed by Sun Yat-sen raised a revolt in a number of Southern provinces against Yuan Shih-kai, but this revolt known as "the second revolu-

tion" was defeated. Soon Yuan Shih-kai disbanded the Parliament that had been convened on the basis of the 1912 Constitution, and banned all revolutionary parties. This was followed by massive arrests and executions of revolutionaries throughout the country. A military dictatorship headed by Yuan Shih-kai was established in China.

The *Communist International* (Comintern, Third International)—the world revolutionary proletarian organisation which united the Communist Parties of various countries; it existed from 1919 to 1943.

The Communist International was founded in March 1919, at its first congress held in Moscow. It restored and consolidated the links between the working people of all countries, helped to uncover opportunism in the world labour movement, strengthen the new Communist parties and work out the strategy and tactics of the international communist movement.

In May 1943, the Comintern Executive Committee decided to dissolve the Communist International, taking into consideration that this way of uniting workers relevant in an earlier historical period had by then outlived itself.

The *Communist Workers' Party of Germany* was formed in 1920 by a group of "Left" Communists who had split off in 1919 from the Communist Party of Germany. This group which adhered to semi-anarchist views had no influence in the working class and degenerated into an insignificant sect hostile to the communist movement.

The *Constituent Assembly*. Soon after the February 1917 revolution the bourgeois Provisional Government declared its decision to convene a Constituent Assembly. However, it did not fulfil its promise, repeatedly postponing the elections.

The Constituent Assembly was convened after the October Socialist Revolution, on January 5, 1918, in Petrograd. Since the elections to the Constituent Assembly were held according to the lists drawn up before the October Revolution, its composition reflected the old balance of class forces when power had still been in the hands of the bourgeoisie. There was a sharp disagreement between the will of the overwhelming majority of the people, who supported the Soviet Government, and the policy pursued by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Cadets who constituted the majority in the Constituent Assembly and expressed the interests of the bourgeoisie and landowners. Since the Constituent Assembly refused to discuss the Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People and approve the decrees of the Second Congress on peace, land and the transfer of power to the Soviets, it was dissolved by decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 6 (19), 1918.

The *Council of the United Nobility*—a monarchist organisation of feudalist landowners set up in Russia in 1906 to oppose the revolutionary people and protect the autocratic system, the large landed estates and the privileges of the nobility. It existed until 1917.

*Cultural-national autonomy*—an opportunist programme on the national question proposed by Austrian Social-Democrats Otto Bauer and Karl Renner. The programme can be summed up as follows: all persons of one nationality inhabiting one country, irrespective of the part of the country where they lived, should form an autonomous national union within the jurisdiction of which should be placed education (separate schools for children of various nationalities) and other branches of education and culture. This programme if it had been implemented would have led to the spread of church influence and reactionary nationalism within each national group and would have impeded the organisation of the working class by splitting the workers over the nationality principle. In Russia the slogan of cultural-national autonomy was supported by the liquidators, Bundists and Georgian Mensheviks. Lenin sharply criticised the slogan of cultural-national autonomy and showed that its underlying aim was "securing separation of all nations from one another by means of a special state institution".

## D

The *December armed uprising* of workers in Moscow lasted from December 9 to 18, 1905. In a number of districts barricades were erected. For nine days workers led by Moscow Bolsheviks fought heroically against the tsarist police and troops. The uprising was suppressed only when the Guards were called in from St. Petersburg. The tsarist government savagely persecuted the workers and their families; thousands of workers, their wives and children were murdered in Moscow and its suburbs.

The *Decembrists*—Russian revolutionary noblemen who founded secret revolutionary societies early in the 19th century. The Decembrists aimed at overthrowing the autocracy and abolishing serfdom in Russia. The Northern Society of the Decembrists staged a revolt in St. Petersburg in December (hence their name) 1825, but the revolt was suppressed on the same day by the troops of Tsar Nicholas I. A simultaneous revolt of the Chernigov regiment in the Ukraine lasted several days but was also suppressed. It was headed by officers—members of the Southern Society of Decembrists.

These revolts were a failure because this was a struggle of isolated revolutionaries, out of touch with the people, who had no support in the mass popular movement.

Nicholas I brutally suppressed the Decembrists' revolt. Its five leaders Pestel, Ryleyev, Kakhovsky, Muravyov-Apostol and Bestuzhev-Ryumin were executed, the others were sent to penal settlements or exile in Siberia.

*Democratic Centralists*, group of Democratic Centralists—an opportunist group in the R.C.P.(B.) which took shape in 1919. Its leaders were Osinsky, Maximovsky and Sapronov. The group denied the guiding role of the Party in the Soviets and trade unions, came out against enlisting bourgeois specialists for work in the national economy and against introducing one-man management at factories, and demanded freedom for factions and groupings. Having failed to win any support from the Party members, the group of Democratic Centralists fell apart in 1923, and its leaders formed a bloc with the Trotskyist opposition.

The *Democratic Conference* was held in Petrograd from September 14 to 22, 1917. It was called by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in an attempt to stem the rising tide of revolution. It was attended by more than 1,500 people. Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders took steps to decrease the number of workers' and peasants' representatives and to increase the number of delegates from various petty-bourgeois and bourgeois organisations, thus securing a majority for themselves at the conference.

The Democratic Conference decided to set up a pre-Parliament (Provisional Council of the Republic) in an attempt to make it appear that a parliamentary system had been established in Russia. According to the regulations adopted by the Provisional Government the pre-Parliament was to be its consultative body. Lenin insisted on boycotting the pre-Parliament, because participation in that institution would have sown illusions that it could solve the tasks of the revolution. On October 7, when the pre-Parliament opened, the Bolsheviks read out their declaration and withdrew from the pre-Parliament.

*Dyelo Naroda* (People's Cause)—a newspaper, organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, which was published in Petrograd from March 1917 till June 1918.

## E

*Economism*—an opportunist trend in Russian Social-Democracy at the turn of the century. The Economists opposed Social-Democracy's participation in the political struggle, asserting that the working class should confine its activities to the economic struggle for higher wages, better working conditions, etc. They maintained that "politics always obediently follows economics", a proposition which actually distorted Marx's theory. Making a fetish of the spontaneity

of the working-class movement, they denied the leading role of the Party and the importance of Marxist theory in the working-class movement.

Lenin provided a critical analysis of Economism in his book, *What Is To Be Done?* and in a number of articles printed in *Iskra* and other works. The ideological struggle waged by the revolutionary Social-Democrats against the Economists ended with a complete defeat of the latter. By the time the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. met in 1903, the Economists had lost all influence among the working masses.

The *Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)* was held in Moscow from March 18 to 23, 1919 and was attended by over 400 delegates. The items on the agenda included: Report of the Party Central Committee; Programme of the R.C.P.(B.); formation of the Communist International; work in the countryside.

The Congress adopted a new Party Programme worked out under Lenin's guidance. It passed a resolution moved by Lenin on the attitude to be adopted to the middle peasants, which stressed the necessity of establishing a firm alliance between the working class and the middle peasantry.

The *Emancipation of Labour group*—the first Russian Marxist group, founded by G. V. Plekhanov in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1889; the group included P. B. Axelrod, L. G. Deutsch, V. I. Zasulich and V. N. Ignatov.

The group did a great deal to spread Marxism in Russia. It translated into Russian works by Marx and Engels, published them abroad and organised their distribution in Russia and also expounded Marxism in its own publications. The Emancipation of Labour group established contacts with the international working-class movement and represented Russian Social-Democracy at the congresses of the Second International beginning with its First Congress in 1889 in Paris. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903 the group announced its dissolution, its members joining the R.S.D.L.P.

The *Entente*—an imperialist bloc of Britain, France and Russia, which took final shape in 1907 in opposition to the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. It derived its name from the Entente cordiale concluded in 1904 between Britain and France. During the First World War the Entente was joined by the USA, Japan and other countries. After the Great October Socialist Revolution, the leading members of the Entente—Britain, France and the USA—organised military intervention against Soviet Russia.

The *Erfurt Programme*—the programme of the German Social-Democratic Party adopted at its congress in Erfurt in October 1891. It was based on the Marxist doctrine of the inevitable downfall of

the capitalist mode of production and its replacement by the socialist one. The Erfurt Programme was a step forward compared with the previous Party programme adopted at the Gotha Congress in 1875 but it contained serious concessions to opportunism. A critical analysis of the draft Erfurt Programme was provided by Engels in his "Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891".

## F

The *Fabian Society*—a British reformist organisation founded in 1884 by Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Bernard Shaw and others. It was so called after the Roman General Quintus Fabius Maximus (3rd century B.C.) surnamed Cunctator (Procrastinator) for his marking time and evasion of decisive battles in the war with Hannibal. The Fabians opposed socialist revolution and held that the transition from capitalism to socialism could be brought about by means of minor and gradual reforms. Lenin described Fabianism as "an extremely opportunist trend".

The *Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was held in London from April 30 to May 19 (May 13 to June 1), 1907. It was attended by 336 delegates who represented more than 147,000 Party members. The Congress discussed the following questions: report of the Central Committee, attitudes towards the bourgeois parties, the "labour congress" and the non-Party workers' organisations, and others. The Congress was a scene of struggle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks on all issues and ended in a victory for the Bolsheviks: Bolshevik resolutions were adopted on all fundamental questions.

The *First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was held in Minsk in March 1898. It was attended by nine delegates from six organisations. The Congress published a manifesto proclaiming the establishment of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and elected its Central Committee. However, soon after the Congress all members of the Central Committee were arrested, thus making it impossible to unite separate Social-Democratic circles in a single party.

The *Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, took place in Stockholm, from April 10 to 25 (April 23 to May 8), 1906. It was attended by 169 delegates representing 57 local Party organisations. The Congress discussed the following questions: revision of the agrarian programme, an appraisal of the current situation and the class tasks of the proletariat, the attitude to the Duma, the armed uprising and other issues. There was a controversy between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks over every item. The Congress revealed to the Party rank and file the content and the depth of the fundamental differences between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.



## G

*Guesdists*—supporters of the Left, revolutionary trend in the French socialist movement, headed by Jules Guesde (1845-1922). In 1879 the Guesdists founded the Workers' Party of France, the first independent political party of the French proletariat. The Party programme adopted at the Havre Congress (1880) was drawn up by Guesde and Lafargue with the assistance of Marx and Engels. In the 1880s-1890s they waged a struggle against the Possibilists, representatives of an opportunist trend. In 1901 the Guesdists formed the Socialist Party of France. After the United French Socialist Party was formed in 1905, the Guesdists made up its revolutionary, Marxist wing.

On the outbreak of the First World War Jules Guesde and other leaders of the Party betrayed the working-class cause, adopting a social-chauvinist stand and coming out in support of the imperialist war. Jules Guesde became a minister in the French bourgeois government.

## H

The *Hague Congress of the First International* was held between September 2 and 7, 1872. It was attended by 65 delegates from 15 national organisations and discussed the status of the General Council, political activities of the proletariat and several other questions. The work of the Congress was guided by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. The Congress denounced the disruptive activities of the Bakuninist Alliance of Socialist Democracy and expelled Bakunin, Guillaume and some other anarchist leaders from the International. It adopted a decision to transfer the headquarters of the General Council to the United States of America.

*Hervéists*—followers of the French anarcho-syndicalist, Gustave Hervé (1871-1944), who had advanced ultra-Left slogans in his newspaper *La Guerre Sociale* (Social War) before the First World War.

The *Hungarian Socialist Revolution of 1919*. On March 21, 1919, the rule of the bourgeoisie was overthrown in Hungary as a result of the socialist revolution which established Soviet rule. A government was formed consisting of representatives of the Communist Party and the Social-Democratic Party, which soon merged to form the Hungarian Socialist Party. The Soviet government of Hungary issued decrees on the nationalisation of industrial enterprises, transport and the banks. Workers' wages were increased by an average of 25 per cent, and an 8-hour working day was introduced. Land reform law was also issued.

The Entente imperialists set up an economic blockade of the Hungarian Soviet Republic and soon sent their troops in to suppress it. Right-wing socialist members of the Hungarian government betrayed the revolution and sided with the interventionists. On August 1, 1919, as a result of joint action by the foreign imperialist interventionists and internal forces of counter-revolution, Soviet power in Hungary was overthrown.

# I

*"Imperialist economism"* is the name given by Lenin to the opportunist trend which took shape within the Russian, Polish and Dutch Social-Democratic parties during the First World War (1914-18). Its representatives came out against the slogan that "Every nation has the right to self-determination", and asserted that in the imperialist epoch there can be neither national liberation movements nor national wars. They interpreted Marxism extremely dogmatically and oversimplified it. They maintained that since in the epoch of imperialism the working class was confronted by the task of accomplishing socialist revolution, there was no need for it to wage a struggle for democracy, political liberties, national independence of the oppressed peoples and so forth. Lenin pointed to the similarity between this trend and Economism which was widespread among a section of Russian Social-Democrats at the end of the 19th century and in the beginning of the 20th century. In 1916 he wrote: "Capitalism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with political problems, the old Economists reasoned in 1894-1901, falling into rejection of the political struggle in Russia. Imperialism has triumphed—*therefore* there is no need to bother with the problems of political democracy, reason the present-day imperialist Economists."

The *Independent Labour Party* of Britain was founded in 1893. It was headed by James Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. The Party leaders pursued a liberal policy in the working-class movement. During the First World War of 1914-18 the Independent Labour Party under cover of pacifist phrases pursued a social-chauvinist policy. In 1921 its Left wing split away from the I.L.P. and joined the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The *Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany* was formed in April 1917 by Centrists who split away from the German Social-Democratic Party. In December 1920 the Left wing of the Independent Social-Democratic Party joined the Communist Party of Germany, and the Right wingers returned to the Social-Democratic Party in 1922.

After the revolution of November 1918 the Party opposed the Workers' Councils, created by the German proletariat, being turned into organs of state power. They proposed that the Councils should "be combined" with a bourgeois Parliament so that they would actually become appendages to the bourgeois state apparatus.

The *Industrial Workers of the World* (I.W.W.)—a workers' trade union organisation founded in the U.S.A. in 1905. Anarcho-syndicalist views which found expression in their renunciation of political struggle were widespread among its leaders.

In 1914-18 the I.W.W. led a number of mass anti-imperialist war actions for which it was subjected to severe repressions. Its membership at the time exceeded 100,000 men. While pointing out that "we are dealing with a profoundly proletarian and mass movement", Lenin criticised the erroneous approach of those I.W.W. leaders who degenerated towards Left sectarianism by refusing to carry on work among the membership of reactionary trade unions and by coming out against participation in bourgeois parliaments.

Later on the I.W.W. from which the genuine revolutionary elements split away became an insignificant sectarian organisation, which had no influence on the working masses.

The *Internationale* group was set up at the beginning of the First World War by Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin and other German Left Social-Democrats. The group conducted propaganda against Germans who went over to the side of imperialism. It was persecuted by the German Government for its revolutionary activities. Rosa Luxemburg and other members of the group held erroneous views on a number of theoretical and political issues. Lenin criticised their mistakes in his articles "The Junius Pamphlet", "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism" and others. Beginning with January 1916 the *Internationale* group became known as the Spartacus group and later as the Spartacus League. In December 1918 the Spartacus League members formed the Communist Party of Germany.

The *International Socialist Bureau* (I.S.B.)—the executive body and information bureau of the Second International. It was set up according to the decision of the Paris Congress of the International in 1900 and consisted of representatives from all Socialist parties belonging to the International, two from each. Emile Vandervelde was Chairman of the I.S.B. and Camille Huysmans, its Secretary. Lenin became a member of the Bureau in 1905, as the representative of the R.S.D.L.P. The International Socialist Bureau actually ceased to exist in 1914, after the First World War broke out.

The *Irish rebellion of 1916*—a revolt of the Irish people against the British enslavement of Ireland that broke out in April 1916. The workers and petty bourgeoisie of Dublin and the Irish Volunteers

(an organisation led by the Left leaders of the Irish national liberation movement) seized power in Dublin and proclaimed a republic. Armed uprisings started simultaneously in other cities and counties of the country.

The British Government used troops and artillery against the insurgents. Dublin was fired at from a battleship. The heroic struggle of the Dubliners against these superior forces lasted about a week. After crushing the rebellion, the British Government resorted to bloody reprisals against its participants—several thousands were imprisoned and the leaders of the rebellion executed.

*Iskra* (The Spark)—the first all-Russia Marxist revolutionary paper founded by Lenin in 1900. It was published first in Munich, and then in Geneva and illegally brought into Russia. *Iskra* greatly influenced the development of the revolutionary workers' movement in Russia. Its editorial board consisted of Lenin, Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod and Vera Zasulich. After the Party split into the revolutionary wing (Bolsheviks) and an opportunist one (Mensheviks), a split that took place at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903, *Iskra* became the mouthpiece of the Mensheviks beginning with the issue No. 51 and came to be known as the *new Iskra*, as distinct from the *old*, Leninist *Iskra*.

The *Italian Socialist Party* was founded in 1892. From its very foundation it was rent by bitter ideological struggle between the opportunist and the revolutionary trends. At the Reggio-Emilia Congress of 1912, the most outspoken reformists, who supported the war and collaboration with the government and the bourgeoisie (Ivanoe Bonomi, Leonida Bissolati and others), were expelled from the party under pressure from the Left wing. After the outbreak of the First World War and prior to Italy's entry into it, the I.S.P. came out against the war and advanced the slogan: "Against war, for neutrality!" In December 1914, a group of renegades including Benito Mussolini, who advocated the bourgeoisie's imperialist policy and urged Italy's entry into the war, were expelled from the party. When Italy entered the war on the Entente's side (May 1915), three distinct trends emerged within the Italian Socialist Party: 1) the Right wing, which aided the bourgeoisie in the conduct of the war; 2) the Centre which united most party members and propagated the slogan: "No participation in the war, and no sabotage of the war", and 3) the Left wing, which took a firmer anti-war stand, but was unable to organise a consistent struggle against the war.

After the October Socialist Revolution in Russia the Left wing of the I.S.P. grew stronger. The 16th Party Congress held from October 5 to 8, 1919, in Bologna, adopted a decision to join the Third International. The I.S.P. representatives took part in the

work of the Second Congress of the Communist International.

After the Congress, the Centrist Serrati, leader of the delegation, came out against a break with the reformists. At the 17th Party Congress in Livorno in January 1921, the Centrists, who were in the majority, refused to break with the reformists and to accept without reservation all the terms of admission into the Comintern. The Left-wing delegates walked out of the Congress and founded the Communist Party of Italy.

## J

*The July days of 1917.* On July 3, 1917, spontaneous mass demonstrations of workers and soldiers took place in Petrograd in protest against the offensive on the German front ordered by the Provisional Government. The demonstrators carried Bolshevik slogans demanding the termination of the imperialist war and transfer of all power to the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. On July 4, the demonstrations continued, and the numbers swelled. With the consent of the Menshevik and Socialist-Revolutionary leaders of Soviets, the Provisional Government brought in troops to disperse the demonstrators and they started firing at the unarmed people.

The Bolshevik Party considered that the conditions for starting an armed uprising against the Provisional Government and taking power by the Soviets had not been ripe, and they took part in the demonstration so as to lend it a peaceful character. On the night of July 4, the Central and Petrograd Committees of the Bolshevik Party adopted a decision at a joint meeting to discontinue the demonstration.

After the July days the Provisional Government started brutal reprisals against Petrograd workers, primarily Bolsheviks. Mass arrests began, the premises of the Bolshevik newspapers were raided and revolutionary-minded military units were sent to the front.

*The June offensive of 1917.* On June 18 (July 1), 1917, on the orders of the Provisional Government which meekly fulfilled the commands of the Entente imperialists, Russian troops started an offensive on the German front. It was launched against the will of the popular masses, which were demanding an end to the imperialist war, and ended in a heavy defeat and the loss of nearly 60,000 men. The June offensive evoked sharp indignation on the part of workers and soldiers against the criminal policy of the Provisional Government, which led to spontaneous demonstrations in Petrograd on July 3-4, carried out under the slogan: "All power to the Soviets!"

## K

The *Kapp putsch*—a military-monarchist coup d'état organised by the German reactionary militarists in March 1920. It was headed by the big landowner Kapp and generals Ludendorff, Seeckt and Lüttwitz. On March 13 the mutinous generals moved troops against Berlin and, meeting with only insignificant resistance from the Social-Democratic government, proclaimed a military dictatorship. The German workers replied with a general strike. Under pressure from the proletariat, the Kapp government was overthrown on March 17, and the Right-wing Social-Democrats again took power.

*Kautskyism*—see *Centre, Centrism*.

The *Kienthal Conference*—the second international conference of internationalist socialists during the First World War which was held in Kienthal (Switzerland) in April 1916. It was attended by delegates from 10 countries—Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, Poland, Norway, Austria, Serbia and Portugal. Its agenda included among others the following items: the struggle to end the war and the attitude of the proletariat to questions of peace. Centrists and groups close to them were in the majority at this conference as at the Zimmerwald Conference. But thanks to the work done by Lenin and other members of the Zimmerwald Left the internationalist wing was more numerous at the Kienthal Conference than it had been at the Zimmerwald Conference, 12 out of 43 delegates belonged to the Zimmerwald Left, and on a number of issues about half of the delegates voted for its proposals. The conference adopted an "Appeal to the Peoples that Are Being Ruined and Exterminated".

The *Kornilov revolt*—a counter-revolutionary revolt which broke out on August 25 (September 7), 1917 and was led by the tsarist general Kornilov. The conspirators hoped to put an end to the mounting revolutionary movement of workers and peasants and establish a military dictatorship in the country. Kornilov sent a cavalry corps against revolutionary Petrograd. The Bolshevik Party called upon the revolutionary workers and soldiers to combat the counter-revolution. The newly formed Red Guard detachments stopped the advance of Kornilov's troops; the mutiny was suppressed within a few days. Under pressure from the masses, the Provisional Government had to order the arrest and prosecution of Kornilov and his accomplices.

The *Kronstadt mutiny*—a counter-revolutionary revolt which began on February 28, 1921. It was organised by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Cadets and other counter-revolutionary groups who had deceived and misled some of the Kronstadt sailors. The ring-leaders put forward the slogan: "Soviets without Communists", scheming to

remove the Communists from the Soviets and thus abolish Soviet rule and restore capitalism in Russia. The revolt was suppressed by March 18, 1921.

## L

*Lassalleans*—supporters of the German socialist Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864), members of the General Association of German Workers founded by Lassalle in 1863. The creation of a mass political party of the working class was a step forward in the development of the working-class movement in Germany. However, the Lassalleans pursued an opportunist policy because they sought to collaborate with the Bismarck reactionary government in order to obtain subsidies from it for setting up so-called workers' production associations and also because they supported Bismarck's dominant-nation policy on the question of the unification of Germany. When the Lassalleans united with the Eisenachers in 1875 to form the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany, they made up its opportunist wing.

The *League of Nations*—an international organisation which existed between the First and Second World Wars. It was founded in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference of the victor countries in the First World War, its Charter forming part of the Versailles Peace Treaty. The League was comprised of forty-three member countries, including the main imperialist states except the U.S.A. It was the organisational centre of armed intervention against Soviet Russia. The League did not take any effective measures to maintain peace or to prevent a new war. At the beginning of the Second World War the League of Nations in practical terms ceased to exist. The formal decision to dissolve the League was taken in April 1946.

The *League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class*—an illegal organisation founded by V. I. Lenin, A. A. Vaneyev, P. K. Zaporozhets, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, Nadezhda Krupskaya, Y. Martov and others in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1895. The League united about twenty workers' Marxist circles. All its activity was based on the principle of centralism and strict discipline. It led the working-class movement, linking the workers' struggle for economic demands with the political struggle against tsarism. The League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was, in Lenin's words, the embryo of the revolutionary party of the working class.

In December 1895 Lenin and other leaders of the League were arrested by the tsarist government and exiled to Siberia. The leadership in the League was taken over by the "young" who preached Economism.

The "*Left Communists*"—an opportunist group formed in the R.C.P.(B) in January 1918 during the debate on the Brest Peace Treaty. Using Left phrasology and appealing for "revolutionary war", the group advocated an adventuristic policy that would have drawn the country, which at that time had no proper army, into a war with imperialist Germany and would have jeopardised the very existence of the Soviet Republic. As a result of the inner-Party struggle, the policy of the "*Left Communists*", opposed by the Party majority led by Lenin, was renounced. The Seventh Party Congress held in March 1918 adopted a resolution motioned by Lenin on the need to conclude the Brest Peace Treaty.

After the peace treaty was signed with Germany and her allies, the "*Left Communists*" came out with their criticism of the Party policy in the sphere of economic construction. They opposed the strengthening of labour discipline and failed to understand the need for employing bourgeois specialists. Lenin criticised the "*Left Communists*" in a number of articles and speeches and pointed out the erroneous nature of their stand on questions of war and peace and economic development.

The *Left Socialist-Revolutionaries*—Left wing of the Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries which split away from it and formed an independent party in November 1917. After much hesitation the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in an attempt to retain their influence among the peasants agreed to co-operate with the Bolsheviks. As a result of the talks held in November and early December 1917 the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries agreed that the latter would enter the government. The Left Socialist-Revolutionaries were assigned posts in the Council of People's Commissars and some collegiums of the People's Commissariats.

Although they started to co-operate with the Bolsheviks, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries still differed from them on basic questions of socialist construction and came out against the dictatorship of the proletariat. In January-February 1918 the Central Committee of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries waged a struggle against the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty; after it was signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets in March 1918 the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries resigned from their posts in the Council of People's Commissars. In July 1918, in an attempt to provoke war between Germany and Russia, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries assassinated the German Ambassador in Moscow, Count Mirbach, and simultaneously engineered a revolt against Soviet power. The revolt was suppressed within 24 hours. Subsequently some of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries took part in the counter-revolutionaries' armed struggle against Soviet Russia.



The *Lena events*—the shooting of the workers in the Lena goldfields (Siberia) on April 4 (17), 1912. The workers who had gone on strike, demanded an end to inhuman exploitation and outrages on the part of the administration and a shorter working day. The authorities sent out the troops against the workers. As a result 270 people were killed and 250 wounded. The bloodshed in the Lena goldfields aroused angry indignation throughout Russia; there were strikes of protest all over the country, which marked the beginning of a new revolutionary upsurge.

The *Liquidators*—an opportunist trend that spread among the Menshevik Social-Democrats after the defeat of the 1905-07 Revolution. Its leading representatives included A. N. Potresov, N. Cherevanin, Y. Larin.

The liquidators demanded the dissolution of the illegal revolutionary working-class party. They urged the workers to abandon the revolutionary struggle against tsarism and planned to call a non-Party "labour congress" in order to establish a "legal", "broad" labour party which would unite various elements, even Socialist-Revolutionaries, anarchists, etc. This "broad" party was to renounce revolutionary slogans and engage only in legal activity permitted by the tsarist government. Lenin and other Bolsheviks tirelessly exposed this betrayal of the revolution by the liquidators. The policy of the liquidators was not supported by the workers. The Prague Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. which took place in January 1912 expelled them from the Party.

The *London Conference of Socialists of the Entente countries* met in February 1915. Its delegates represented the social-chauvinist and the pacifist groups in the Socialist parties of Britain and France, as well as the Russian Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. Though the Bolsheviks were not invited to the conference, Litvinov, on Lenin's instruction, read at the conference the declaration of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee, which demanded the withdrawal of socialists from bourgeois governments and a complete rupture with the imperialists, and called for an end to collaboration with the imperialist governments, a resolute struggle against them and the condemnation of voting for war credits. The chairman interrupted Litvinov as he was reading the declaration and deprived him of the right to speak. The latter handed the declaration over to the presidium and left the conference.

The *London Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*—see the *Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*

*Longuetists or Minoritaires*—the Centrist minority of the French Socialist Party formed in 1915 and headed by Jean Longuet. During the First World War they adopted a social-pacifist stand. At the Tours Congress of the French Socialist Party in December 1920,

where the revolutionary Left wing gained ascendancy and formed the French Communist Party, the Longuetists together with the reformists split away from the party. They joined the Two-and-a-Half International, and after its collapse returned to the Second International.

## M

**The *Mensheviks***—an opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement, led by Y. Martov, G. V. Plekhanov, A. N. Potresov and others.

They became known as Mensheviks at the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903, when the Party split into the revolutionary wing led by Lenin, and the opportunist wing headed by Martov. During the elections to the central Party bodies the revolutionary Social-Democrats gained a majority (*bolshinstvo*), while the opportunists found themselves in the minority (*meshinstvo*). Hence the names: Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

During the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07 the Mensheviks opposed the hegemony of the working class in the revolution and its alliance with the revolutionary peasantry and held that the bourgeoisie should lead the revolution. After the defeat of the Revolution of 1905-07 most of the Mensheviks became liquidators: they demanded the liquidation of the revolutionary illegal party of the working class and the establishment of a legal party that would renounce revolutionary struggle and adapt its activities to the conditions of the reactionary Stolypin regime. In 1917 Mensheviks held posts in the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution they took part in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet state.

***Military Revolutionary Committee*** of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies was set up on October 12 (25), 1917, for the preparation of the armed uprising and the formation of Red Guard detachments. It consisted of representatives of the Central Committee and the Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party, representatives of the trade unions and military organisations. It was headed by Y. M. Sverdlov, F. E. Dzerzhinsky and other Bolsheviks. After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution and the establishment of Soviet state apparatus the Military Revolutionary Committee was abolished.

***Millerandism***—see *Ministerialism*.

***Ministerialism*, or *Millerandism***—extreme opportunist trend of favouring socialists' participation in bourgeois reactionary governments. It was called so after the French Socialist Millerand who betrayed the cause of socialism and joined the French bourgeois government in 1899.

## N

**Narodism**—an ideological and political trend that took shape in Russia in the 1870s.

The Narodniks considered themselves socialists but their conception of socialism was a utopia in contradiction with the entire course of social development. They maintained that capitalism had no prospect of development in Russia and that the big capitalist enterprises in the country were "fortuitous" phenomena, a "deviation" from the "proper" course of its development. They saw the "proper" course to be the development of small production. The Narodniks considered the peasantry and not the proletariat the force capable of building socialism in Russia. They regarded the village commune, which was actually a survival of serfdom and a medieval fetter on the peasantry, hindering social progress, as the basis for building socialism.

The philosophic views of the Narodniks were an eclectic mixture of positivism, Neo-Kantianism and other fashionable ideological trends. The ideologists of Narodism P. L. Lavrov and N. K. Mikhailovsky advocated an idealist view of history, denying the role of the people in historical development and maintaining that history was made by "heroes", outstanding personalities, whom they counterposed to the passive "crowd".

In different periods there arose in Russia various parties adhering to Narodnik views.

The revolutionary Narodniks of the 1870s went out to the villages, i.e., "among the people", and waged propaganda among the peasants, trying to arouse them to rebellion against the tsar and the landowners. In 1876 they founded *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom) society, which in 1879 split into two parties: *Cherny Peredel* (General Redistribution), which continued to wage revolutionary propaganda, and *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will), which waged struggle against the tsarist autocracy by means of individual terrorism. Both parties ceased to exist in the 1880s.

A new Narodnik trend, called "Liberal Narodism", appeared in the legal Russian press in the late 1880s and 1890s. The liberal Narodniks renounced revolutionary struggle against the autocracy and sought to obtain certain reforms from the tsarist government, mostly in the interests of the rich peasants, the kulaks.

In 1902 a new Narodnik party of Socialist-Revolutionaries was formed. Their main method of struggle against the autocracy was individual terrorism. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party demanded the abolition of landed proprietorship and the transfer of the landed estates to the peasants to be used on the basis of "equal land tenure" and systematic redistribution of the land according to

the number of the mouths or able-bodied members in the family. In 1906 a part of the Right wing split away from the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and formed the Party of Popular Socialists, whose programme was very close to that of the bourgeois-liberal Party of Constitutional Democrats. In 1917, both parties—the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Popular Socialists—sided with the forces of counter-revolution and took part in the armed struggle against the Soviet state.

*Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will)—an illegal revolutionary party formed in 1879. It was headed by an executive committee which included A. I. Zhelyabov, S. L. Perovskaya, V. N. Figner, N. A. Morozov and others. The immediate aim of the *Narodnaya Volya* was the overthrow of tsarist autocracy and the establishment of a "permanent popular representative body", elected on the basis of universal suffrage, the proclamation of democratic liberties, the abolition of the landed estates and the transfer of all land to the peasants. The *Narodnaya Volya* members considered individual terrorism to be the chief method of struggle against tsarism. They organised a number of attempts on the lives of tsarist dignitaries and on March 1, 1881, assassinated Alexander II. They erroneously believed that a small group of revolutionaries could seize power and abolish the autocracy without revolutionary movement of the people. After March 1, 1881, the government routed the *Narodnaya Volya* party through cruel reprisals: most of its members were executed or imprisoned for life in the Schlisselburg Fortress. The party ceased to exist in the 1880s.

*Narodowa Demokracja* (National Democracy)—a reactionary nationalist party of Polish landowners and capitalists, founded in 1897. It was closely associated with the Catholic church and preached militant nationalism and chauvinism. It opposed the democratic and socialist movement of the Polish working people and tried to isolate them from the revolutionary movement in Russia. During the 1905-07 Revolution the *Narodowa Demokracja* Party supported tsarism in its struggle against the people's revolution. In the First World War they took the side of the Entente banking on tsarist Russia's victory and hoping that Poland would be granted autonomy within the Russian Empire and regain her lands seized by Austria and Germany.

*New Economic Policy (NEP)*—the economic policy introduced in Soviet Russia in 1921. It was called new in contrast to "War Communism", the economic policy pursued in the period of the Civil War and based on extreme centralisation of production and distribution, prohibition of free trade and the surplus-appropriation system under which the peasants were obliged to deliver to the state all surplus produce.

The New Economic Policy permitted a certain margin of capitalist enterprise and free trade, but the basic economic positions were held by the state. With the substitution of a tax in kind for the surplus-appropriation system, the peasants were able to sell their surplus produce on the market. The New Economic Policy was designed to develop the country's productive forces, step up agriculture and raise the funds necessary for building socialist industry.

The *Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)* was held in Moscow between March 29 and April 5, 1920. It was attended by 715 delegates. The first question on its agenda was the report of the Central Committee delivered by Lenin. The Congress also discussed the immediate tasks of economic construction and pointed out that "the main condition of the country's economic rehabilitation is the undeviating implementation of an integrated economic plan projected for the immediate historical period ahead". The Congress condemned the stand taken by the group of Democratic Centralists who came out against the employment of bourgeois specialists for the rehabilitation of the country's economy and against the introduction of one-man management in industry.

The *Ninth Paragraph of the R.S.D.L.P. Programme* approved at the Second Party Congress (1903) contained a demand for the recognition of "the right of every nation within a state for self-determination".

*Novaya Zhizn* (New Life)—a newspaper, organ of a group of Social-Democrats known as the internationalists, whose members were Left-wing Mensheviks and non-aligned intellectuals of a semi-Menshevik complexion. The paper was published in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918. Prior to October 1917 it pursued a policy of unstable opposition to the bourgeois Provisional Government, sometimes siding with it and opposing the Bolsheviks. After the October Revolution it adopted a hostile stand towards the Soviet Government.

## O

The *October 1905 general strike*. In October 1905 the revolutionary proletariat of Russia called an all-Russia political strike, bringing all industry and railway transport to a standstill. The October general strike involved over two million people and was carried out with slogans calling for the overthrow of the autocracy, the convocation of a Constituent Assembly and an eight-hour working day. The general strike demonstrated the great power of the working class. On October 17, 1905, the tsar was compelled to issue a manifesto promising a constitution and freedom of speech, assembly, the press, etc. The promise was never fulfilled.

*Octobrists*—members of the Octobrist Party or Union of October Seventeenth, formed in Russia in November 1905. Its leaders were A. I. Guchkov, and M. V. Rodzyanko.

The name of the Party was designed to express its solidarity with the tsar's Manifesto of October 17, 1905 which promised to introduce constitutional liberties in Russia. The Party's policy was hostile to the people; it defended the interests of the powerful capitalists and the landowners who were running their estates on capitalist lines. They fully supported the reactionary home and foreign policies of the tsarist government. After the October Socialist Revolution in 1917 the Octobrists together with the Cadets and helped by the Entente imperialists organised counter-revolutionary armed struggle against the Soviet state.

*Opposition on principle*—a group of German Left-wing Communists advocating anarcho-syndicalist views. When the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Germany, held in Heidelberg in October 1919, expelled the opposition, the latter formed the so-called Communist Workers' Party of Germany (C.W.P.G.), in April 1920. The Third Congress of the Communist International in June and July 1921, which tried to win over the workers who were still following the Communist Workers' Party, resolved to give it two months to call a congress and settle the question of affiliation. The C.W.P.G. leadership did not comply with the Third Congress's resolution and thereby placed the party outside the Communist International. Later the C.W.P.G. degenerated into a small sectarian group without any working-class support.

The *Organising Committee* (O.C.)—the leading centre of the Mensheviks set up in August 1912 at the conference of the Menshevik liquidators and opportunist groups collaborating with them. During the First World War it adopted a social-chauvinist stand.

*Otzovism and Ultimatumism*—a Left opportunist turned, which emerged among a section of the Bolsheviks after the defeat of the 1905-07 Revolution and was headed by A. A. Bogdanov, A. V. Lunacharsky and G. A. Alexinsky. The otzovists demanded the recall of the Social-Democrat deputies from the Duma and rejected Party work in legal organisations—the trade unions, co-operatives and other mass organisations. The ultimatumists proposed that the Social-Democrat Duma members be presented with an ultimatum or be recalled from the Duma. Yet in the period of reaction that set in after the defeat of the revolution the Party could extend its contacts with the working masses and muster forces for a new revolutionary upsurge only by combining illegal methods of work with work in legal organisations. The policy pursued by the otzovists and ultimatumists did great harm to the Party, isolating it from the masses. Lenin waged a vigorous struggle against the otzovists and the ultima-

tumists, exposing the latter as "liquidators from the Left". A. A. Bogdanov, the leader of otzovism, was expelled from the Party.

## P

*Panslavism*—a reactionary political trend that advocated a unification of the Slavonic countries under the aegis of tsarist Russia and tried to use for this purpose the Slavs' struggle for liberation from Turkish, Austrian and Hungarian oppression.

The *Paris Commune of 1871*—the first historical attempt to set up a proletarian dictatorship. The Paris Commune, which existed from March 18 to May 28, 1871, separated the church from the state and the school from the church, replaced the standing army by the universal arming of the people, made all offices in the courts and civil service elective, decreeing that the salaries of civil servants should not exceed workers' wages, and carried out other measures to improve the conditions of the workers and the urban poor. On May 21, 1871 the troops of Thier's counter-revolutionary government broke into Paris and wrought a veritable massacre of Paris workers: about 30,000 people were killed, 50,000 arrested and many thousands sentenced to penal servitude.

The *Party of Peaceful Renovation*—a party of the big bourgeoisie and landowners. It was formed in 1906 and united the Left Octobrists and the Right Cadets who demanded a constitution providing for representation restricted through high property qualifications. In 1912 they merged with the Progressist Party.

*Party Week* was carried out by the Party organisations from August to November 1919, i.e., in the period of the Soviet state's intense struggle against foreign military intervention and internal counter-revolution. In 38 gubernias of the European part of the R.S.F.S.R. alone Party Weeks won over 200,000 new members, of whom more than half were workers. At the front-line up to 25 per cent of the army and navy joined the Party. Lenin wrote that workers and peasants who joined the Party at such a difficult period made up "a fine and reliable body of leaders of the revolutionary proletariat and of the non-exploiting section of the peasantry".

The *Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk* was signed in Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 between Soviet Russia and the powers of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany and its allies). Its terms were extremely onerous for Russia. Under this treaty Poland and almost the whole of the Baltic region were to be placed under the control of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and the Ukraine was made a German dependency. Russia was to pay Germany reparations. The Soviet Government had to sign this treaty because the tsarist army had fallen

apart, and the Red Army, meanwhile, was only just taking shape. Despite its harsh terms, the Brest Treaty gave the Soviet state a vital respite and an opportunity to withdraw from war for some time and muster strength so as to rout the counter-revolution started by the landowners and the bourgeoisie, and the foreign interventionists who soon attacked the Soviet state.

After the November 1918 revolution in Germany the Brest Treaty was annulled.

The *Peasant Union*—a revolutionary-democratic organisation which was formed in August 1905. It demanded an immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly and an introduction of political liberties. Its agrarian programme included a demand for the abolition of private landownership and the transfer to the peasants of state, monastery and crown lands without compensation. By the end of 1906 the Peasant Union, which was subjected to brutal police persecution, ceased to exist.

*Persian Revolution of 1906-11.* At the end of 1905 demonstrations began in Teheran, Tabriz and other towns against the despotic regime of the Shah who had reduced the people to utter destitution and was helping the foreign imperialists turn the country into a semi-colony. In August 1906 the Shah was compelled to grant a constitution and the Majlis (Parliament) was convened in October the same year.

The revolutionary struggle involved ever wider sections of the population. The first Social-Democratic organisations were established in Tabriz and Resht and a mass labour movement developed. Strikes broke out in the foreign concessions of Northern Persia; elected democratic bodies were set up in the towns in the north and volunteer detachments organised to fight the counter-revolution. A peasant movement developed in several areas in 1907: the peasants refused to perform their feudal duties, demanded land and seized landed estates.

In August 1907, the tsarist government, after having strangled the revolution in Russia, concluded an agreement with the British Government dividing Persia into Russian and British spheres of influence. In June 1908, Colonel Lyakhov, the commander of the Russian Cossack brigade stationed in Teheran, made a deal with the Shah and engineered a counter-revolutionary coup d'état. The Majlis building was shelled and some deputies were brutally murdered; Lyakhov was appointed military governor of Teheran.

But the people's struggle continued. Revolutionary detachments captured Tabriz and Resht, and in July 1909 entered Teheran, defeated Lyakhov's Cossacks and deposed Shah Mohammed Ali. Power, however, passed into the hands of the big bourgeoisie and landlords, who were eager to crush the revolution.



Towards the end of 1911 the tsarist government occupied Azerbaijan, Gilan and Khorasan, and the British landed in Southern Persia. The revolutionary popular movement was savagely suppressed, all the gains of the revolution wiped out and the rule of the Shah and the feudal landowners re-established.

*Possibilists (Broussists)*—an opportunist trend in the French socialist movement that took shape in the 1890s and was led by Benoît Malon and Paul Brousse. The Possibilists opposed the revolutionary wing of the French Workers' Party led by Jules Guesde and Paul Lafargue and in 1882 formed a separate party. They maintained that the workers should abandon their revolutionary struggle against capitalism and put forward such demands which it would be possible to accomplish under capitalism.

In 1889 the Possibilists tried to convene a congress of opportunist groups in Paris and capture the leadership of the international working-class movement. However, this attempt ended in failure. The socialist parties, with the exception of the British Social-Democratic Federation, did not join the Possibilists. In 1902, in conjunction with other opportunist groups, they organised the French Socialist Party.

*Pravda* (The Truth)—a daily newspaper, organ of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee, founded by Lenin on May 5, 1912.

*Pravda* was the first legal, mass newspaper for workers in tsarist Russia. It was published in St. Petersburg with money collected by the workers themselves. A wide circle of worker correspondents and worker writers started contributing to the paper. It was subjected to constant police harassment. In two years and three months *Pravda* was closed down by the tsarist government eight times, but reappeared under other names. It was closed down on July 21, 1914, on the eve of the First World War.

Publication was resumed after the February bourgeois-democratic revolution. On March 18, 1917 *Pravda* began to appear as the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P. On July 5 (18), 1917 the newspaper offices were wrecked by officer cadets and Cossacks. Between July and October 1917 *Pravda* was persecuted by the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and repeatedly changed its name, coming out as *Listok Pravdy* (*Pravda's Sheet*), *Proletary* (*The Proletarian*), *Rabochy* (*The Worker*), *Rabochy Put* (*Worker's Path*), etc.

After the October Socialist Revolution in 1917, the newspaper appeared under its old name of *Pravda*. It has been published in Moscow since March 1918.

*Programme of the R.S.D.L.P.* adopted at the Second Congress of the Party in 1903 consisted of two parts: a minimum programme, which contained political demands pertaining to the bourgeois-democratic revolution: overthrow of the autocracy, a democratic republic, abo-

lition of landed proprietorship and an eight-hour working day; and a maximum programme formulating the ultimate goal of the working-class struggle: socialist revolution, abolition of capitalism, establishment of proletarian dictatorship and the building of socialism.

*Progressists*—a political group of the Russian liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, which in 1912 formed an independent party with the following programme: suppression of the revolutionary movement, a constitution with a limited franchise, a responsible Ministry, i.e., a government accountable to the Duma, and minor reforms. The party was headed by the powerful capitalists P. P. Ryabushinsky, A. I. Konovalov and others. During the First World War the Progressists fully supported the aggressive imperialist policy of the tsarist government but criticised its bad organisation with regard to the army and its supplies and demanded a change of military leadership. After the October Socialist Revolution of 1917 the party leaders helped to organise a counter-revolutionary armed struggle against the Soviet state.

## R

*Rabocheye Dyelo* (Workers' Cause)—a journal, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad. It was published in Geneva from April 1899 to February 1902 and voiced the views of the Economists.

*Revolutionaries of the 1870s*. In the early 1870s circles of revolutionary youth were formed in Russia under the influence of the revolutionary ideas of Chernyshevsky, Herzen and Ogaryov. These revolutionary-minded young people engaged in struggle against the tsarist government. They went "among the people" and waged revolutionary propaganda among the peasants urging them to rise up against the tsarist autocracy. This work ended in failure due to the extreme backwardness of the peasant masses. The tsarist government retaliated with severe reprisals: hundreds of young people were sentenced to penal servitude and executed and many others died, tormented in the tsar's prisons. In 1876, the separate revolutionary circles united to form *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Freedom) Party. From the late 1870s the most vigorous and selfless struggle against the tsarist autocracy was waged by the Narodnaya Volya Party (see *Narodnaya Volya*).

The *Revolution of 1905-07*—the first Russian revolution. It began on January 9, 1905 when tsarist troops fired on a peaceful demonstration of St. Petersburg workers, their wives and children, who had marched to the Winter Palace to present a petition to the tsar in which they complained of their unbearable condition. Thousands were killed and wounded.

The working class of Russia answered the criminal deed of the tsarist government with demonstrations carried out under the slogan "Down with the autocracy!", strikes and armed actions. The peasants joined the struggle against the autocratic landowners' state, demanding the transfer of the landed estates to the people. In June 1905 a mutiny broke out on the Black-Sea Fleet cruiser *Potyomkin*. A general political strike was called in October 1905: all factories and transport were brought to a standstill. On October 17 the tsar was obliged to issue a manifesto promising a constitution and freedom of speech, assembly and the press. The tsar's promises were a fraud and were never carried out. In December 1905 armed uprisings broke out in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don and other cities. The workers fought heroically on the barricades against the tsarist troops and although the First Russian Revolution suffered defeat, its historic significance was immense. It was, in Lenin's words, a "dress rehearsal" without which the victory of the working class in Russia in October 1917 would have been impossible.

*Russian critics*—"legal Marxists" and Economists, who in the 1890s came out with criticism of Marx's revolutionary teaching. Both "legal Marxism" and Economism were Russian varieties of international opportunism led by Bernstein.

## S

The *Second Congress of the Communist International* was held from July 19 to August 7, 1920. The Congress was opened in Petrograd, and its subsequent meetings were held in Moscow. It was attended by over 200 delegates representing 67 workers' organisations in 37 countries. Besides delegates from Communist parties and organisations it was also attended by delegates from the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Socialist parties of Italy and France, Spain's National Confederation of Labour and other organisations.

The report on the international situation and the fundamental tasks of the Communist International was delivered by Lenin. The Congress also discussed the question concerning the role and organisational principles of Communist parties before and after the conquest of power by the proletariat, the question of parliamentarism, the national and the colonial questions, the agrarian question and various others. The Congress endorsed the 21 terms of admission into the Communist International in which the programme and tactical principles of the Comintern had been formulated in brief.

The *Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was held from July 17 (30) to August 10 (23), 1903, meeting first in Brussels and then in London.

It was attended by 43 delegates with votes representing 26 organisations. It discussed, among others, the following questions: Party Programme, national question, economic struggle and trade-union movement, Party Rules. The Congress adopted the Party Programme and Rules. It was at this Congress that the Party split into the adherents of a revolutionary trend led by Lenin and the followers of an opportunist trend led by Martov. Lenin's adherents received the majority of votes during the elections to the Party central bodies and became known as Bolsheviks (from the Russian word "bolshinstvo" meaning "majority"), and the opportunists, who were in the minority, were called Mensheviks (from the Russian word "menshinstvo" meaning "minority").

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. put an end to the circle spirit in the Social-Democratic movement and founded a revolutionary Marxist working-class party in Russia, the Bolshevik Party. The *Second International*—an international association of socialist parties founded in 1889. When the First World War of 1914-18 broke out, the leaders of the Second International betrayed the cause of socialism, sided with their imperialist governments, and the Second International split up. The Left parties and groups which had been affiliated to the Second International joined the Third, Communist International founded in Moscow in 1919. The Second International was re-established at the Berne Conference in 1919. It was joined only by the Right-wing, opportunist parties in the socialist movement.

The *secret treaties* concluded by the tsarist government of Russia with imperialist states were made public by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs in December 1917, by a decision of the Second All-Russia Congress of the Soviets. Over one hundred treaties and other secret documents of the tsarist and Provisional governments of Russia were taken from the archives of the Foreign Ministry, deciphered and published in newspapers and subsequently in nine collections. Their publication played an important part in exposing the imperialist nature of the First World War.

The *Social-Democratic Federation of Britain* was founded in 1884. Along with reformists (Hyndman and others) the Social-Democratic Federation included a group of revolutionary Social-Democrats, supporters of Marxism—Harry Quelch, Tom Mann, Edward Aveling, Eleanor Marx and others. The main shortcoming of the Federation was its lack of contact with the mass working-class movement.

In 1907 it was renamed the Social-Democratic Party, which in 1911, together with Left elements from the Independent Labour Party, formed the British Socialist Party. In 1920 most of that party's membership participated in founding the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The *Socialist-Revolutionaries* (S.R.s.)—a petty-bourgeois democratic party formed in Russia at the end of 1901 and beginning of 1902 through the amalgamation of various Narodnik groups and circles. Their views were based on Narodnik ideas: they denied the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution, regarding the peasantry as the main force for the building of socialism, and opposed the theory of dialectical materialism. They regarded individual terrorism as the basic method of struggle against tsarism: in 1902 the Socialist-Revolutionary Balmashev assassinated Sipyagin, Minister of the Interior, in 1905 Kalyayev assassinated Moscow Governor-General Grand Prince Sergei Alexandrovich, etc. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party was headed by V. M. Chernov, B. V. Savinkov, N. D. Avksentyev and others.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries' agrarian programme envisaged the abolition of the landed estates, of private ownership of the land and its transfer to village communes on the basis of "egalitarian land tenure" with systematic redistribution of land according to the number of mouths or able-bodied members in each family (the so-called "socialisation" of the land).

After the defeat of the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07 the S.R. Party underwent a crisis: its leaders actually renounced revolutionary struggle against tsarism. During the First World War most Socialist-Revolutionaries adopted a social-chauvinist stand. When the February bourgeois-democratic revolution overthrew the tsarist autocracy, Socialist-Revolutionary leaders (Chernov and Avksentyev) joined the bourgeois Provisional Government, waged a struggle against the working class that was preparing for the socialist revolution and took part in the suppression of the peasant movement in the summer of 1917. After the establishment of Soviet power in Russia in October 1917 Socialist-Revolutionary leaders took part in organising counter-revolutionary armed struggle and helped the foreign interventionists in their struggle against the Soviet state.

The *Spartacists*, the *Spartacus group*—see the *Internationale* group.

The *State Duma*, *Duma*—a representative institution which the tsarist government had to convene as a result of the revolutionary events of 1905. Formally it was a legislative body but actually it had no real power. Elections to the Duma were indirect and suffrage was unequal and not universal. The franchise of the working people and non-Russian nationalities inhabiting Russia was greatly restricted, while considerable numbers of workers and peasants were deprived of the right to elect altogether. According to the electoral law of December 11, 1905, one landowner's vote was rated equal to three votes of representatives of urban bourgeoisie, 15 peasant votes and 45 workers' votes.

The First Duma (April-July 1906) and the Second Duma (February-June 1907), in which the majority was made up of liberal-bourgeois Cadets and similar groups were dissolved by the tsarist government. After the coup d'état of June 3, 1907, the government promulgated a new electoral law which secured an overwhelming majority of the reactionary bloc of landowners and big capitalists in the Third (1907-1912) and the Fourth (1912-1917) Dumas.

The *Stockholm Congress*—see the *Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*

The *Stuttgart International Socialist Congress*—the Seventh Congress of the Second International held in August 1907.

The congress was attended by about 900 delegates representing Socialist parties and workers' organisations from 25 countries. It discussed the following questions: the colonial question, relations between political parties and trade unions, immigration and emigration of workers, women's suffrage, militarism and international conflicts.

A struggle developed at the congress between the revolutionary wing of the international socialist movement represented by the Russian Bolsheviks with their leader Lenin and the German Left Social-Democrats including Rosa Luxemburg, and the opportunists—Vollmar, Bernstein, Van Kol, and others. The opportunists were defeated. The congress adopted resolutions which formulated the tasks of the Socialist parties in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism.

The congress resolution on "Militarism and International Conflicts" stated that if an imperialist war broke out the working class of the belligerent countries "should strive by all means to use the economic and political crisis caused by the war for stirring up the popular masses and hastening the downfall of the capitalists' class rule".

The *Stuttgart Resolution*—see the *Stuttgart International Socialist Congress*.

## T

The *Tenth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)* was held in Moscow from March 8 to 16, 1921. It was attended by nearly a thousand delegates. The Congress discussed, among others, the following questions: Report of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.); the trade unions' economic role; food supplies, surplus-appropriation system and tax in kind; the Party's current tasks with regard to the nationalities question, and problems of Party organisation.

The Congress adopted a decision on the transition from War Communism to the New Economic Policy and the substitution of a tax in kind for the system of surplus appropriation. It passed a

resolution "On Party Unity" which ordered the immediate dissolution of all factions and groups which tended to weaken the Party and disrupted its unity. The Congress also adopted a resolution "On the Syndicalist and Anarchist Deviation in Our Party" which described the views of the so-called Workers' Opposition headed by A. M. Kollontai and A. G. Shlyapnikov as petty-bourgeois, anarchist vacillations incompatible with membership of the Party.

The *Third Congress of the Communist International* was held in Moscow from June 22 to July 12, 1921. It was attended by over 600 delegates representing 103 organisations from 52 countries. The Congress discussed the world economic crisis and the new tasks of the Communist International, the Italian question, the tactics of the Communist International and other questions. Lenin delivered a report on the tactics of the R.C.P.(B). The Congress paid particular attention to the tactics of the Communist International, the struggle against Centristism and against the "Left" opportunism which had supporters in the Communist Parties of several countries.

The *Treaty of Versailles*—an imperialist peace treaty which ended the First World War of 1914-18. It was signed in Versailles in June 1919 between Britain, France, Italy and Japan, on the one hand, and defeated Germany, on the other.

The Treaty of Versailles legalised the redivision of the world in favour of the victor countries. Germany's colonies were divided among them. The Saar region was placed under the jurisdiction of the League of Nations for 15 years, while its coal mines became the property of France. The Treaty imposed on Germany large reparation payments. The victor countries took from Germany a large number of ships, tens of millions of tons of coal, half her stock of dye-stuffs and chemical products and so on. The Treaty was a heavy burden first and foremost for the working masses of Germany, who had to pay high taxes and suffered chronic unemployment. As to the German capitalists and tycoons of heavy industry, they retained their key positions in the country and continued to make colossal profits.

The *Triple Alliance* of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy took shape in 1879-82. It was directed mainly against Russia and France. During the First World War Italy sided with the Entente and in 1915 joined the war against its former allies, Germany and Austria-Hungary, as a result of which the Triple Alliance broke apart.

The *Triple Entente*—see the *Entente*.

The *Trudoviks* (the Trudovik group)—a group of petty-bourgeois democrats of a Narodnik trend in the Duma. It comprised Socialist-Revolutionaries, Popular Socialists and many non-party peasant deputies. The Trudoviks demanded the abolition of all social and national restrictions, universal suffrage, democratisation of urban

and rural local government, and, in their agrarian programme, the transfer of all landed estates to the peasants. From the Duma rostrum they criticised the tsarist government's policies, especially on the agrarian question. On a number of questions, however, they vacillated between the bourgeois liberals (Cadets) and the Social-Democrats.

When the First World War broke out the Trudoviks adopted a social-chauvinist stand.

The *Turkish revolution of 1908-09*. The revolutionary movement against the despotic rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II was led by the Young Turks, i.e., members of the Unity and Progress Party founded in 1894 by a group of progressive intellectuals representing the interests of the commercial bourgeoisie.

In July 1908, troops commanded by Young Turk officers mutinied and were supported by the townsfolk and peasants. Fearing the spread of the revolutionary movement, Sultan Abdul Hamid II proclaimed the restoration of the 1876 Constitution, which he had himself abrogated in 1878 when Parliament had been dissolved. A new parliament was convened at the end of 1908.

The development of the revolution in Turkey jeopardised the plans of the imperialist powers on the colonial enslavement of the Near and Middle East. Accordingly, in August and September 1908, Germany, Russia, France, Britain, Austria-Hungary and Italy discussed ways and means of suppressing the Turkish revolution and further steps to partition Turkey. The outcome of these talks was the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1908 (both provinces had been under temporary Austrian occupation since 1878); Bulgaria seceded from Turkey once and for all and Prince Ferdinand of Germany was proclaimed King of Bulgaria.

In 1909 Sultan Abdul Hamid II was deposed and Turkey proclaimed a constitutional monarchy. A new Young Turk government was formed.

The Turkish revolution of 1908-09, as Lenin pointed out, was not a popular revolution, in as much as the "mass of the people, the enormous majority did not come out actively, independently, with their own economic and political demands" and played no conspicuous part in the revolution.

The *Two-and-a-Half International* (officially the Socialist International)—an international association of Centrist socialist parties and groups which under pressure of the revolutionary masses left the Second International. It was formed in Vienna in February 1921. While criticising the Second International, its leaders actually pursued an opportunist policy in the labour movement and made use of this international organisation to oppose the growing Com-



munist influence among the workers. In 1923 the Two-and-a-Half International joined the Second International to form the so-called Socialist Labour International.

## U

*Ultimatism*—see *Otzovism and Ultimatism*.

The *Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad* was founded in Geneva (Switzerland) in 1894 on the initiative of the Emancipation of Labour group. The First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in 1898 recognised the Union as the Party representative abroad. Subsequently the Economists prevailed in the Union. In April 1899 the Union began to publish the magazine *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Workers' Cause) which advocated Economism and expressed sympathy with Eduard Bernstein. The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in 1903 recognised the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad as the only foreign organisation of the Party and dissolved the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad.

## V

*Vekhi* (Landmarks)—a Cadet symposium published in Moscow in 1909. In this collection representatives of Russian liberalism renounced the revolutionary-democratic traditions of the Russian emancipation movement, vilified the revolution of 1905-07 and thanked the tsarist government for having "with its bayonets and prisons" saved the privileged top strata of society from "popular fury". Lenin called this collection of essays an "encyclopaedia of liberal renegacy". He wrote that liberal renegades "had broken with the most fundamental ideas of democracy, the most elementary democratic tendencies".

*Vekhism*—see *Vekhi*.

## W

The *War Industries Committees* were set up in Russia in 1915 by the big capitalists with the object of rendering assistance to the tsarist government in waging the imperialist war. They were headed by the leader of the Octobrists, A. I. Guchkov. In an effort to bring the workers under their influence and demonstrate the establishment of a "class truce" between the workers and the bourgeoisie, the leaders of the War Industries Committees formed "workers' groups" within the Committees, which consisted of

social-chauvinists. Revolutionary workers boycotted the War Industries Committees and did not take part in the elections to the "workers' groups".

## Y

The "*Young*"—a semi-anarchist opposition in the German Social-Democratic Party that came into being in 1890. The group consisted of young writers. They criticised the policy of the Party and advanced a platform denying the need to make use of legal forms of struggle and opposing all Social-Democratic participation in Parliament. The Erfurt Congress of the Social-Democratic Party held in October 1891 expelled some of their leaders from the Party.

## Z

*Zarya* (The Dawn)—a scientific and political journal of revolutionary Marxists published by the *Iskra* Editorial Board in Stuttgart in 1901-02.

The *Zemstvo* was a form of local government introduced in Russia in 1864. The *Zemstvos* had limited rights. They had jurisdiction over purely local affairs—hospitals, primary schools, roads, etc. Members of the uyezd and gubernia *Zemstvos* were elected at the respective *Zemstvo* assemblies with the provision that members from among the nobility should constitute not less than 57 per cent of the *Zemstvo* membership. The activities of the *Zemstvos* were controlled by provincial governors who had the right to reject any unsuitable member of the *Zemstvo* Executive, to disband *Zemstvo* assemblies and others.

A large part of the *Zemstvo* functionaries opposed the tsarist government. But their opposition was of a moderate character. At *Zemstvo* assemblies they came out with the demand for extended rights for the *Zemstvos*, submitted petitions for reforms and so forth. Many members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party had originally been active in the *Zemstvos*.

*Zemstvo men*—see *Zemstvo*.

The *Zimmerwald Conference*—the first world conference of socialist internationalists held during the First World War. It met in September 1915 and was attended by 38 delegates from 11 European countries—Germany, France, Italy, Russia, Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Sweden, Norway, Holland and Switzerland. English socialists could not attend since the British government refused to issue passports for them. The two largest parties of the Second International—the German Social-Democratic Party and the

French Socialist Party—were likewise not represented at the Conference.

The Zimmerwald Conference adopted a manifesto which condemned the imperialist governments who had unleashed the world war and criticised, although not quite consistently, the social-chauvinists. A sharp struggle flared up at the Conference between the pro-Centrist majority and the revolutionary internationalists headed by Lenin. Lenin and other revolutionary internationalists signed the Manifesto but at the same time issued a declaration saying, "We are not quite satisfied with the Manifesto adopted by the Conference. It does not contain a definition of either avowed opportunism, or opportunism which masks itself with radical phrases.... It does not define clearly the means of struggle against the war."

The revolutionary internationalists suggested that the Conference resolutions should point to the need for a complete break with the social-chauvinists and call the masses to wage a revolutionary struggle against their imperialist governments.

The Zimmerwald group was formed at this Conference.

The *Zimmerwald Left Group*, formed at the Zimmerwald Conference in September 1915, united the revolutionary internationalists at the Conference. It consisted of delegates from the Bolsheviks, the Left Social-Democrats of Sweden, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, and others. The Zimmerwald Left elected a Bureau which after the Conference continued its work aimed at rallying revolutionary internationalists of various countries.

## NAME INDEX

### A

- Adler, Friedrich* (1879-1960)—Austrian Social-Democrat; in 1916 he assassinated the Austrian Prime Minister Count Sturgkh in protest against the war. After the revolution of 1918 in Austria he sided with the opportunists; one of the organisers of the Two-and-a-Half International (1921-23) and subsequently a leader of the opportunist Socialist Labour International.—343, 352, 359
- Adler, Fritz*—see *Adler, Friedrich*
- Alexander II (Romanov)* (1818-1881)—Russian Emperor (1855-81).—159
- Alexeyev, Mikhail Uasilyevich* (1857-1918)—tsarist general, monarchist; one of the organisers of counter-revolutionary revolts against Soviet power.—228
- Alexinsky, Grigory Alexeyevich* (b. 1879)—Russian Social-Democrat, Bolshevik during the Revolution of 1905-07; after the defeat of the Revolution he became an otzovist, he was one of the organisers of the anti-Party *Uporyod* group.

During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand and after the October Socialist Revolution took an active part in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet state.—97, 127, 136, 138-39, 150-51

- Austerlitz, Friedrich* (1862-1931)—one of the leaders of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—352

*Avksentyev, Nikolai Dmitriyevich* (1878-1943)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, a social-chauvinist during the First World War. In 1917 he entered the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he participated in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet state.—198, 226, 276

*Avramov, P. F.* (c. 1875-1906)—a Cossack officer who exhibited great brutality in suppressing the peasant movement in the Tambov Gubernia in 1905; he tortured Maria Spiridonova, one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

In 1906 he was assassinated by Socialist-Revolutionaries.—435-38

*Axelrod, Pavel Borisovich* (1850-1928)—Russian Social-Democrat, who in 1883 took part in founding the first Russian Marxist organisation, the Emancipation of Labour group. Following the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903 he was one of the Menshevik leaders. After the defeat of the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07 he became a liquidator. During the First World War of 1914-18 he adopted a Centrist position disguising his social-chauvinism in pacifist phraseology. He was an enemy of the October Socialist Revolution of 1917.—13, 92, 398

## B

*Babushkin, Ivan Vasilyevich* (1873-1906)—a worker, professional revolutionary and Bolshevik. He helped to organise the Leninist newspaper *Iskra* and took an active part in the Revolution of 1905-07. When transporting arms for revolutionary fighters he was seized and shot by the officers of the punitive expedition.—380

*Badayev, Alexei Yegorovich* (1883-1951)—Bolshevik; a deputy elected by the workers of St. Petersburg Gubernia to the Fourth Duma, subsequently a Soviet statesman and Party leader.—95

*Bagration, Dmitry Petrovich*

(b. 1863)—tsarist general; took part in the Kornilov revolt.—228

*Bakunin, Mikhail Alexandrovich* (1814-1876)—Russian revolutionary; one of the founders and ideologists of anarchism who wrote a number of works on its theory and the movement. After joining the First International, he organised within it a secret Alliance of Socialist Democracy with a view to splitting the International. In 1872 he was expelled from the First International for his factionalist activities.—15, 204

*Ballod, Karl* (1864-1931)—economist, author of works on economics, among them the book *Der Zukunftsstaat* (The Future State).—466

*Bauer, Otto* (1882-1938)—a leader of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party and of the Second International; ideologist of "Austro-Marxism", a variety of revisionism and one of the authors of the bourgeois nationalist theory of national-cultural autonomy.—58, 89, 343, 352, 359, 404, 418, 460

*Bazarov, Vladimir Alexandrovich* (1874-1939)—Russian Social-Democrat, philosopher and economist; champion of idealist Machean philosophy.—256-58

*Bebel, August* (1840-1913)—one of the founders and leaders of German Social-Democracy and the Second International; he led the revolutionary wing of the German Social-Democratic Party and opposed opportun-

- ism and revisionism in the Social-Democratic movement. A talented organiser and publicist, he exerted a great influence on the German and international working-class movement.—29, 80, 211, 356, 467, 471
- Belinsky, Vissarion Grigoryevich** (1811-1848)—Russian revolutionary democrat, utopian-socialist philosopher and literary critic. His articles, printed in journals of the 1830s and 1840s exerted a powerful influence on the progress of the revolutionary movement in Russia.—14, 284
- Berdyaev, Nikolai Alexandrovich** (1874-1948)—idealist and mystical philosopher; "legal Marxist" in the 1890s, subsequently a Constitutional-Democrat, an enemy of Marxism.—39
- Bernstein, Eduard** (1850-1932)—German Social-Democrat, ideologist of revisionism. Soon after Engels' death Bernstein came out with a demand that Marxism be revised. Putting forward an opportunist slogan "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing" he maintained that Social-Democrats should renounce their struggle for socialism and the socialist revolution, and confine themselves to the struggle for economic reforms to improve the condition of the workers under capitalism.—8-9, 12, 195, 203-05, 237, 356, 421
- Bismarck, Otto Eduard Leopold** (1815-1898)—German statesman, Chancellor of Prussia during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870; he effected the unification of separate German states into the German Empire under Prussian hegemony; Chancellor of Germany from 1871 to 1891.—66-67
- Bissolati, Leonida** (1857-1920)—one of the founders of the Italian Socialist Party and leader of its opportunist wing.—96, 197
- Blank, Rufim Markovich** (b. 1886)—a publicist, close to the Constitutional-Democrats.—429-35, 438-44
- Bobrinsky, Uladimir Alexeyevich** (b. 1868)—reactionary politician, monarchist; champion of forcible russification of the border regions in tsarist Russia inhabited by non-Russian peoples.—65, 67
- Bordiga, Amadeo** (b. 1889)—an Italian politician; he led a trend close to anarchism in the Italian Socialist Party. In 1921 he took part in founding the Italian Communist Party but in 1930 was expelled from it for his anti-Party activities.—392
- Branting, Carl Hjalmar** (1860-1925)—opportunist leader of the Social-Democratic Party of Sweden and of the Second International.—197
- Brentano, Lujo** (1844-1931)—German economist, representative of Katheder-socialism; he sought to prove that it was possible to solve social contradictions by way of reform and called for renunciation of the class struggle.—39

*Breshko-Breshkovskaya, Yekaterina Konstantinovna* (1844-1934)—one of the organisers and leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, who belonged to its extreme Right wing.—253-54

*Briand, Aristide* (1862-1932)—French statesman. In the early period of his activities he belonged to the Left wing of the Socialist movement, but subsequently became a bourgeois politician; and held portfolios in many bourgeois governments; Prime Minister of France (1913, 1915-17, 1921-22).—246

*Buchanan, George William* (1854-1924)—English diplomat, British Ambassador to Russia from 1910 to 1918. After the October Socialist Revolution he supported the counter-revolutionary forces in their struggle against Soviet power.—178

*Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich* (1888-1938)—publicist and economist, member of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) from 1906. He adopted anti-Leninist stands on such questions as the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the right of nations to self-determination and others. During the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty with Germany in 1918 he headed the anti-Party group of Left Communists and after 1928 he led the Right-opposition in the Party. In 1937 he was expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities.—359

*Bulgakov, Sergei Nikolayevich*

(1871-1944)—Russian economist; idealist philosopher. In the 1890s a "legal Marxist"; subsequently he aligned himself with the Cadets and advocated philosophical mysticism, opposing Marxism.—39

*Bulygin, Alexander Grigoryevich* (1851-1919)—statesman in tsarist Russia; in 1905 he headed the commission in charge of drafting a bill on convening a consultative Duma so as to prevent the growth of the revolutionary movement in Russia.—97, 163, 431

*Burtsev, Vladimir Lvovich* (1862-1936)—he was close to the Socialist-Revolutionaries before the Revolution of 1905-07; subsequently he supported the Constitutional-Democrats.—63, 91

## C

*Camphausen, Rudolph* (1803-1890)—Prussian statesman, one of the leaders of the Rhenish liberal bourgeoisie.—426

*Cherevanin (Lipkin), Fyodor Andreyevich* (1868-1938)—one of the Menshevik leaders, a liquidator. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—92

*Chernenkov, B. N.* (b. 1883)—member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party from 1903: statistician.—340

*Chernov, Viktor Mikhailovich* (1876-1952)—one of the leaders and theoreticians of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.—198-99, 220, 226, 239, 399

*Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Gavrillovich* (1828-1889)—Russian revolutionary democrat and materialist philosopher; writer, and literary critic.—14, 64, 398

*Chkheidze, Nikolai Semyonovich* (1864-1926)—one of the Menshevik leaders, deputy to the Third and Fourth Dumas. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand.—93-94, 96, 174-75, 181-82

*Chkhenkeli, Akaky Ivanovich* (1874-1959)—Georgian Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—174, 181

*Churchill, Winston* (1874-1965)—British conservative politician. While Secretary for War (1918-1921) he was one of the inspirers of the military intervention against Soviet Russia. During the Second World War, he was Prime Minister of Britain.—410-11

*Clausewitz, Karl* (1780-1831)—Prussian general, prominent military theoretician, author of works on the history of Napoleon and other wars.—75

*Cornelissen, Christian*—Dutch anarchist, Kropotkin's follower; an opponent of Marxism.—221

*Crispien, Arthur* (1875-1946)—one of the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party.—356, 400, 444

*Cunow, Heinrich* (1862-1936)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, historian, sociologist and ethnographer. At the beginning of his career he supported the Marxists, but subse-

quently became a revisionist. During the First World War he was an ideologist of social-imperialism.—139

## D

*Dan (Gurvich), Fyodor Ivanovich* (1871-1947)—a Menshevik leader.—276

*David, Eduard* (1863-1930)—a Right-wing leader of the German Social-Democratic Party and a revisionist. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—79, 176, 197

*De Leon, Daniel* (1852-1914)—a prominent figure in the American labour movement; he became a leader and ideologist of the American Socialist Labour Party in the 1890s; he opposed the reactionary and opportunist leaders of the American trade unions but at the same time committed sectarian mistakes and preached anarcho-syndicalist views.—377

*Denikin, Anton Ivanovich* (1872-1947)—tsarist general; during the Civil War of 1918-21 he was Commander-in-Chief of the whiteguard armed forces in the south of Russia. After his armies were defeated by Soviet troops, he fled from Russia.—315, 362, 370-71, 387, 477

*Dietzgen, Joseph* (1828-1888)—a German worker, tanner; a prominent Social-Democrat and philosopher who independently arrived at dialectical materialism.—388



*Dittmann, Wilhelm* (1874-1954)—a leader of the German Social-Democratic Party, publicist.—444

*Dolgorukov, Pavel Dmitriyevich*, Count (1866-1930)—a big landowner, one of the founders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party.—64

*Dreyfus, Alfred* (1859-1935)—a Jewish officer of the French General Staff sentenced to life imprisonment in 1894 on a false charge of high treason. As a result of the campaign in defence of Dreyfus waged by the working class and progressive intelligentsia, Dreyfus was pardoned in 1899 and rehabilitated in 1906.—413

*Dubasov, Fyodor Vasilyevich* (1845-1912)—tsarist admiral; he suppressed the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07.—428, 437, 440, 442-43

*Dühring, Eugen* (1833-1921)—German eclectic philosopher and vulgar economist.—127-28, 130, 441

*Durnovo, Pyotr Nikolayevich* (1844-1915)—a statesman of tsarist Russia; Chief of Police between 1884 and 1893; in October 1905, as Minister of the Interior, he instigated cruel measures to suppress the First Russian Revolution.—437

*Dyachenko, Andrei Pavlovich* (1875-1952)—Bolshevik; in 1919 worked as a medical orderly on the Moscow-Kazan Railway.—320

*Dzerzhinsky, Felix Edmundovich* (1877-1926)—outstanding leader of the Polish and Russian

Social-Democratic movement; after the October Socialist Revolution, he was Chairman of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution and Sabotage (*Uecheka*).—479-82, 485

## E

*Ellenbogen, Wilhelm* (b. 1863)—one of the revisionist leaders of Austrian Social-Democracy.—169

*Engels, Frederick* (1820-1895)—9, 11, 16, 47, 65-66, 75, 79-80, 117-18, 127, 188, 211, 221, 224, 356, 365, 377, 392-94, 397, 467, 471-72, 502

*Erler, Karl*—see *Laufenberg, Heinrich*.

## F

*Foch, Ferdinand* (1851-1929)—French marshal. One of the organisers of the military intervention against Soviet Russia in 1918-20.—330

*Fourier, Charles* (1772-1837)—French utopian socialist.—15

## G

*Gagarin, A. U.*, Count—tsarist general, participant in the Kornilov revolt.—228

*Gapon, Georgy Apollonovich* (1870-1906)—priest; on January 9, 1905 he organised a demonstration of St. Petersburg workers to submit a petition to the tsar, which ended with the demonstrators being shot down by tsarist troops.—152

- Ghe, A. Y.* (d. 1919)—Russian anarchist. After the October Socialist Revolution he supported Soviet power.—221
- Gogol, Nikolai Vasil'yevich* (1809-1852)—Russian writer.—284
- Golay, Paul*—Swiss Social-Democrat, publicist.—83
- Gompers, Samuel* (1850-1924)—one of the leaders of the US trade union movement, a founder and Permanent President of the American Federation of Labour from 1895; pursued a policy hostile to the basic interests of the working class, championing class collaboration with the capitalists and opposing socialism.—376, 379-80
- Gorter, Herman* (1864-1927)—Dutch Social-Democrat, publicist. From 1918 to 1921 a member of the Dutch Communist Party; he took part in the work of the Comintern. In 1921 he withdrew from the Party and subsequently retired from political activity.—84
- Grave, Jean* (1854-1939)—French petty-bourgeois socialist, one of the theoreticians of anarchism.—221
- Guchkov, Alexander Ivanovich* (1862-1936)—big capitalist, leader of the Octobrist Party. During the First World War he was Chairman of the Central War Industries Committee and in August 1917 took part in organising the Kornilov revolt. After the October Socialist Revolution he fought against the Soviet State.—64, 174, 178-79, 182-85, 229, 234
- Guesde, Jules* (1845-1922)—one of the founders and leaders of the French socialist movement and the Second International; for a long time he led the Left wing of the French Socialist Party. On the outbreak of the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand and joined the bourgeois government of France.—7, 393, 418
- Guillaume, James* (1844-1916)—publicist, anarchist and enemy of Marxism; one of the leaders of the Bakuninist secret Alliance of Socialist Democracy within the First International. At the Hague Congress of the First International (1872) he was expelled from the International together with Bakunin.—79
- Gurevich, E. L. (Smirnov, Y.)* (b. 1865)—a Social-Democrat, Menshevik; one of the founders of *Nasha Zarya*, organ of the Menshevik liquidators, to which he contributed. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—63
- Gvozdyov, Kuzma Antonovich* (b. 1883)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand; Chairman of the workers' group in the Central War Industries Committee.—174, 176-77, 181-82, 184, 244

## H

- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich* (1770-1831)—classical German philosopher, objective idealist; he elaborated idealist dialectics,

- one of the theoretical sources of dialectical materialism.—15
- Heine, Wolfgang* (1861-1944)—German politician. Right-wing Social-Democrat. After the revolution in Germany in November 1918 he held posts in the Prussian government.—96
- Henderson, Arthur* (1863-1935)—English politician, one of the Right-wing leaders of the Labour Party and trade-union movement. Between 1915 and 1931 he held various portfolios in British Government.—197, 376, 379-80, 410-11
- Herzen, Alexander Ivanovich* (1812-1870)—Russian revolutionary democrat, materialist philosopher and writer. After emigrating he founded a free Russian printing press in London and from 1857 published the fortnightly newspaper *Kolokol* (The Bell), which was illegally conveyed to Russia and played a major part in the development of revolutionary movement in Russia. Herzen's main works are *Letters on the Study of Nature, The Past and Thoughts* and the novel *Who Is To Blame?*.—14
- Hilferding, Rudolf* (1877-1941)—one of the leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand. After the war he advanced an opportunist theory of "organised capitalism"; author of *Finance Capital*.—114, 126, 352, 356, 400, 404, 444
- Hillquit, Morris* (1869-1933)—American socialist, initially he supported Marxism, but later became an opportunist. Author of works on the history of socialism.—423
- Hindenburg, Paul* (1847-1934)—German military leader and statesman. After the October Socialist Revolution, he was one of the chief sponsors of armed military intervention against Soviet Russia.—130, 330
- Höglund, Karl Zeth Constantin* (1884-1956)—Swedish Social-Democrat, Right-wing leader in the Social-Democratic movement in Sweden. During the First World War (1914-1918) an internationalist and later a Communist. In 1924 he was expelled from the Communist Party for his opportunism.—390
- Hörner, K.*—see *Pannekoek, Anton*.
- Hourwich, I. A.* (1860-1924)—economist, author of *Economic Position of the Countryside in Russia and Immigration and Labour*.—128
- Hyndman, Henry Mayers* (1842-1921)—British politician; one of the founders of the Social-Democratic Federation (1880s) and of the British Socialist Party (1911). Between 1900 and 1910 he was a member of the International Socialist Bureau.—418
- I
- Ivanshin, Vladimir Pavlovich* (1869-1918)—Russian Social-

Democrat, Economist from the late 1890s onwards; he became a Menshevik after the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903.—39

## J

*Jacoby, Johann* (1805-1877)—German politician, democrat, and an active participant in the 1848 Revolution.—329

*Jouhaux, Léon* (1879-1954)—prominent in the French and international trade-union movement; adopted a chauvinist stand during the First World War.—377, 378-80

*Junius*—see *Luxemburg, Rosa*.

## K

*Kaledin, Alexei Maximovich* (1861-1918)—tsarist general who took an active part in the Kornilov revolt.—234

*Kapp, Wolfgang* (1858-1922)—representative of German junkerdom and imperialist militarism. In March 1920 he led the counter-revolutionary military-monarchist coup.—409, 411

*Kautsky, Karl* (1853-1938)—a leader of the German Social-Democratic Party and the Second International; initially a Marxist and later a renegade from Marxism, ideologist of Centrism, the most harmful and dangerous variety of opportunism (Kautskianism). Author of the reactionary theory of "ultra-imperialism". He came out openly against the October

Socialist Revolution in Russia and the Soviet state.—58, 78-79, 83-84, 86, 105, 112-13, 129, 167, 189, 195, 204, 327, 334, 343-44, 352, 356, 397, 400, 418, 444, 462, 468

*Kerensky, Alexander Fyodorovich* (1881-1970)—a Socialist-Revolutionary. As Prime Minister of the bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917 he pursued a policy aimed at continuing the imperialist war and keeping power in the hands of the bourgeoisie. After the October Socialist Revolution, he emigrated.—91, 174-75, 179, 181, 185, 229, 231, 239, 245, 261, 264, 362, 369, 400, 404, 416

*Kernzhentsev (Lebedev), Platon Mikhailovich* (1881-1940)—Soviet statesman and Party leader; historian and publicist.—518

*Khodorovsky, I. I.* (1885-1940)—joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903. From 1922 to 1928 he was deputy People's Commissar of Education.—490-91

*Kievsky*—see *Pyatakov, G. L.*

*Kiezewetter, Alexander Alexandrovich* (1866-1933)—Russian historian and publicist, one of the leaders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed the Soviet state, for which he was expelled from Soviet Russia in 1922.—432-35, 437

*Klembovsky, U. N.* (1860-1921)—tsarist general, participant in the Kornilov revolt.—228

*Kolchak, Alexander Vasilyevich* (1873-1920)—admiral of the

- tsarist navy, monarchist; he headed the bourgeois-landowner counter-revolution in Siberia in 1919 with the support of British and French imperialists.—315-16, 319, 362, 387, 477
- Kornilov, Laur Georgiyevich** (1870-1918)—tsarist general, who became Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in 1917. In August 1917 he headed the counter-revolutionary revolt. After the suppression of the revolt he was arrested and sent to jail, but escaped and fled to the Don where he became the organiser and then Commander-in-Chief of the whiteguard Volunteer Army.—227-28, 234, 236, 238-39, 245, 263-64, 408
- Kosovsky, U.** (1870-1941)—Menshevik, one of the Bund leaders.—60
- Krestovnikov, Georgy Alexandrovich** (b. 1855)—big industrialist and stock exchange dealer; Octobrist.—64
- Krichevsky, Boris Naumovich** (1866-1919)—Russian Social-Democrat, a leader of the Economists; he edited the magazine *Rabocheye Dyelo* which propagated Bernsteinian views. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903) he withdrew from the Social-Democratic movement.—21, 29, 39-40
- Kropotkin, Pyotr Alexeyevich** (1842-1921)—Russian revolutionary; an anarchist leader, author of works on the theory of anarchism and the movement. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the October Socialist Revolution he sided with Soviet power and opposed the armed military intervention against the Soviet state organised by the imperialist powers.—63, 91, 221
- Kudashev, I. A., Count** (b. 1859)—Russian diplomat.—94
- Kugelmann, Ludwig** (1830-1902)—German Social-Democrat, participant in the 1848-49 revolution in Germany, member of the First International.—189, 501
- Kuskova, Yekaterina Dmitrievna** (1869-1958)—Russian public figure, author of the "Credo" (1899) which set forth the Bernsteinian programme of the working-class movement and confined the workers' tasks to the struggle for economic reforms. In 1906 she published the semi-Cadet journal *Bez Zaglaviya*. After the October Socialist Revolution she was deported from Soviet Russia for anti-Soviet activities.—438
- Kutler, Nikolai Nikolaevich** (1850-1924)—Cadet, deputy to the Second and Third Dumas. After the October Socialist Revolution he worked in the People's Commissariat of Finance.—64

## L

- Lansbury, George** (1859-1940)—a leader of the British Labour Party.—359, 393
- Lassalle, Ferdinand** (1825-1864)

- German Socialist, founder of the General Association of German workers. He adopted an opportunist stand on a number of major political questions, for which he was sharply criticised by Marx and Engels.—7, 66, 214-16
- Laufenberg, Heinrich (Erler, Karl)* (1872-1932)—German Social-Democrat; after the November 1918 revolution he joined the Communist Party of Germany, in which he led the "Left" opposition that advocated anarcho-syndicalist views. In 1919 he was expelled from the Communist Party.—366, 403
- Ledebour, Georg* (1850-1947)—a German Social-Democrat, who participated in the international Socialist Congress at Stuttgart where he opposed colonialism; subsequently an opportunist.—356, 400
- Legien, Karl* (1861-1920)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat and revisionist; a trade-union leader.—197, 199, 356, 376, 379-80
- Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich (Lenin, N.)* (1870-1924)—17, 43, 45, 53, 71, 97, 98, 101, 108-09, 152, 159, 168, 172, 184, 232, 239, 247, 263, 270, 296, 311, 324, 398, 426, 479, 497, 501-02
- Lensch, Paul* (1873-1926)—German Social-Democrat. On the outbreak of the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. In 1922 he was expelled from the Social-Democratic Party of Germany.—79, 139
- Liebknecht, Karl* (1874-1919)—outstanding leader of the German and international working-class movement; he opposed opportunism and militarism. During the November revolution of 1918 in Germany together with Rosa Luxemburg he headed the vanguard of the German workers; one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany. In January 1919 he was killed by counter-revolutionaries after the suppression of the uprising of the Berlin workers.—98, 382, 390
- Liebknecht, Wilhelm* (1826-1900)—one of the founders and leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party and an active member of the First and Second Internationals. Editor of the newspaper *Vorwärts*, the central organ of the German Social-Democratic Party; he was repeatedly elected to the Reichstag.—71, 80
- Lloyd George, David* (1863-1945)—British statesman; Liberal leader; Prime Minister in 1916-22. One of the organisers of the military intervention against the Soviet state.—410-11
- Longuet, Jean* (1876-1938)—one of the leaders of the French Socialist Party and the Second International; during the First World War he headed the centrist-pacifist minority in the F.S.P. In 1921 he became a member of the Vienna (Two-and-a-Half) International's Executive, and in 1923 one of the leaders of the so-called Socialist Labour International.

—352, 359, 423-24, 444

*Luxemburg, Rosa (Junius)* (1871-1919)—outstanding figure in the German, Polish and international working-class movement; Left-wing leader of the Second International and one of the founders of the Communist Party of Germany. In January 1919 she was killed by counter-revolutionaries after the suppression of the Berlin workers' uprising.—98, 146, 382, 423

*Luov, Georgi Yevgenyevich* (1861-1925)—Cadet; landowner. In 1917 (March-July) he was Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of the bourgeois Provisional Government.—174, 179, 182-83, 185

## M

*MacDonald, James Ramsay* (1866-1937)—one of the founders and leaders of the Independent Labour Party and of the Labour Party; he pursued opportunist policies and during the First World War (1914-1918) adopted a social-chauvinist stand; Prime Minister of Britain in 1924 and 1929-31.—444

*Maklakov, Vasily Alexsyyevich* (b. 1870)—landowner, member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party; deputy to the Second, Third and Fourth Dumas. In July 1917 he was appointed ambassador of the bourgeois Provisional Government to France; later, he emigrated.—234

*Malinovsky, Roman Waclawovich* (1876-1918)—agent provocateur. While a Bolshevik Party member he informed the police about the illegal Party activity; deputy to the Fourth Duma. He was exposed as an agent provocateur in 1917, tried and shot in 1918.—369

*Martov, L. (Tsederbaum, Yuli Osipovich)* (1873-1923)—Russian Social-Democrat; a Menshevik leader. After the defeat of the 1905-07 Revolution he supported the liquidators. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand; emigrated after the October Socialist Revolution.—127, 227, 327, 398-400

*Martynov, Alexander Samoilovich* (1865-1935)—Russian Social-Democrat, one of the ideologists of Economism, after the defeat of the 1905-07 Revolution he became a liquidator. During the First World War he was a Centrist. In 1923 he joined the Communist Party.—21, 22, 29, 36, 39-40, 137

*Marx, Karl* (1818-1883)—9, 12-13, 29, 65-67, 69, 75, 79-80, 85, 89, 113, 120, 187-92, 194, 196-97, 199-200, 203-08, 210, 214-18, 221-22, 237, 241, 260, 290, 333-34, 356, 365, 377, 392, 397, 425-27, 477, 501-02, 504

*Maslov, Pyotr Pavlovich* (1867-1946)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik; author of works on the agrarian question.—63, 92

*Mehring, Franz* (1846-1919)—a Left-wing leader and theoretician of the German Social-

- Democratic Party. During the First World War he was an internationalist. One of the organisers and leaders of the revolutionary Spartacus League, and a founder of the Communist Party of Germany.—425-26
- Menshikov, Mikhail Osipovich* (1859-1919)—publicist, contributor to the reactionary newspaper *Novoye Uremya*.—63
- Merrheim, Alphonse* (1881-1925)—French trade unionist, syndicalist.—376
- Mikhailovsky, Nikolai Konstantinovich* (1842-1904)—outstanding theoretician of liberal Narodism; publicist and literary critic.—38
- Millerand, Alexandre Etienne* (1859-1943)—French politician; in the nineties he supported the Socialists. In 1899 he entered the reactionary bourgeois government of Waldeck-Rousseau where he collaborated with the butcher of the Paris Commune General Galiffet. In 1909-10, 1912-13, 1914-15 he held various portfolios; President of the French Republic in 1920-24.—8-9
- Milyukov, Pavel Nikolayevich* (1859-1943)—leader of the Cadet Party. Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution he became one of the organisers of military intervention against Soviet Russia, a white émigré.—172, 174, 178-79, 181-85, 229, 234, 468
- Min, Georgi Alexandrovich* (1855-1906)—colonel of the tsarist army, who suppressed the armed uprising in Moscow in December 1905 with the utmost cruelty. Assassinated by Socialist-Revolutionaries.—437
- Montesquieu, Charles Louis* (1689-1755)—French sociologist, economist and writer; theoretician of constitutional monarchy.—206
- Mülberger, Arthur* (1847-1907)—German publicist, follower of Proudhon. Author of a number of works on the housing question and the history of social thought in France and Germany; he came out with criticism of Marxism.—441
- Muranov, Matvei Konstantinovich* (1873-1959)—joined the R.S.D.L.P. in 1904; a deputy to the Fourth Duma. In November 1914 he was arrested together with other Bolshevik deputies to the Duma for the revolutionary activity directed against the imperialist war, and subsequently exiled to the Turukhansky Area in Siberia. After the October Socialist Revolution he worked as a Party functionary.—95-96
- Mussolini, Benito* (1883-1945)—prior to the First World War (1914-18) a prominent figure in the opportunist wing of the Italian socialist movement; later organiser and leader of the Italian fascists; fascist dictator from 1922 to 1943.—96

## N

N. R.—319



*Nadezhdin, L. (Zelensky, Yevgeny Osipovich)* (1877-1905)—in the early years of his activity a Narodnik and later a Social-Democrat; he supported the Economists and opposed Lenin's *Iskra*.—17, 20-25, 31-35

*Napoleon I (Bonaparte)* (1769-1821)—Emperor of France (1804-14 and 1815).—229, 504

*Napoleon III (Louis Napoleon)* (1808-1873)—Emperor of France from 1852 to 1870.—70, 80

*Natanson, Mark Andreyevich* (1850-1919)—revolutionary Narodnik, later a Socialist-Revolutionary. During the First World War he adopted an internationalist stand, but on occasions was subject to Centrist deviations.—399

*Nicholas II (Romanov)* (1868-1918)—the last Emperor of Russia (1894-1917).—63, 130, 177-78

*Nikitin, A. M.* (b. 1876)—Menshevik; Minister of the Interior in the last bourgeois Provisional Government.—244

*Noske, Gustav* (1868-1946)—one of the opportunist leaders of the German Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. In 1919-20 War Minister; organiser of the brutal reprisals against the revolutionary Berlin workers and of the assassination of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.—352, 418

## O

*Orjonikidze, Grigori Konstanti-*

*novich* (1868-1937)—one of the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet State. In 1920-21 he was one of the organisers of the struggle for Soviet power in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. From 1921 to 1926 he was Chairman of the C.C. Caucasian Bureau and subsequently Secretary of the Transcaucasian Area Party Committee.—479-82, 485

*Owen, Robert* (1771-1858)—English utopian socialist.—15, 499

## P

*Pannekoek, Anton (Hörner K.)* (1873-1960)—Dutch Social-Democrat. During the First World War he adopted an internationalist stand. From 1918 to 1921 he was a member of the Communist Party of Holland in which he adopted an ultra-Left, sectarian position. In 1921 he resigned from the Communist Party.—84, 366, 370, 402

*Petrousky, Grigori Ivanovich* (1878-1958)—one of the veteran members of the revolutionary working-class movement, Bolshevik, prominent Party and political figure; Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Ukraine in 1919-38.—95

*Peshekhonov, Alexei Vasilyevich* (1867-1933)—Russian public figure and publicist. In 1906 he became one of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois party of Popular Socialists. After the October Socialist Revolution

- he fought against Soviet power; from 1922 a white émigré.—246
- Pilsudski, Jösef* (1867-1935)—statesman in bourgeois-landowner Poland. Between 1918 and 1922 he headed the government; he brutally persecuted the revolutionary movement of the working people.—477
- Pisarev, Dmitri Ivanovich* (1840-1868)—Russian Social-Democrat, publicist and literary critic; materialist philosopher.—29-30
- Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich* (1856-1918)—a leader of the Russian and international working-class movement, first theoretician and propagandist of Marxism in Russia, founder of the Emancipation of Labour group, the first Russian Marxist group (1883). After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903) he became a Menshevik. During the First World War he took up a social-chauvinist stand and adopted a negative attitude towards the October Socialist Revolution.—29, 63, 68, 79, 83-84, 86, 96, 104-05, 176, 182, 184, 187, 190, 200, 204, 221, 355-56, 398, 413, 418, 421, 438-39
- Pomyalovsky, Nikolai Gerasimovich* (1835-1863)—Russian democratic writer; author of *Sketches of Seminary Life*.—220
- Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1869-1934)—one of the Menshevik leaders. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the October Socialist Revolution he was a white émigré.—92, 174, 176-77, 181-82, 184, 398
- Prokopovich, Sergei Nikolayevich* (1871-1955)—Russian economist and publicist, one of the first to propagate Bernsteinism in Russia.—39, 244, 438
- Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph* (1809-1865)—French publicist, economist and sociologist; ideologist of the petty bourgeoisie, a founder of anarchism.—203-04
- Pushkevich, Vladimir Mitrofanovich* (1870-1920)—Russian reactionary landowner, monarchist.—65-66
- Puttkammer, Robert von* (1828-1900)—German reactionary statesman; pursued a policy of persecuting the Social-Democratic and trade-union movement in Germany.—163
- Pyatakov, Georgi Leonidovich* (Kievsky, P.) (1890-1937)—a member of the Bolshevik Party from 1910. During the First World War adopted an anti-Leninist stand on the question of the right of nations to self-determination and other major questions. After the October Socialist Revolution he supported Trotsky and was later expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities.—98-107, 109-14, 116-17, 119-28, 130-40, 142-50

## R

*R. M.*—39-40

*Radek, • Karl Berngardovich*

- (1885-1939)—took part in Social-Democratic movement of Galicia, Poland and Germany from the early 1900s onward. During the First World War he held an internationalist stand, but was prone to various Centrist deviations. From 1923 he was an active member of the Trotskyist opposition.—359
- Radishchev, Alexander Nikolayevich* (1749-1802)—Russian writer, revolutionary enlightener, author of *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow*.—64
- Rakovsky, Khristian Georgiyevich* (1873-1941)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917; an active member of the Trotskyist opposition.—84
- Rasputin (Novykh), Grigory Yefimovich* (1872-1916)—political adventurer who enjoyed great influence at the court of Nicholas II.—173
- Renaudel, Pierre* (1871-1935)—one of the reformist leaders of the French Socialist Party. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—197, 359
- Renner, Karl* (1870-1950)—Austrian politician, leader and theorist of the Right-wing Social-Democrats; one of the ideologists of the so-called Austro-Marxism and of the bourgeois-nationalist theory of national-cultural autonomy. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—58, 89, 352, 359
- Rodichev, Fyodor Ivanovich* (b. 1856)—one of the Cadet leaders, a deputy to the First, Second, Third and Fourth Dumas. After the October Socialist Revolution a white émigré.—64
- Rodzyanko, Mikhail Uladimirovich* (1859-1924)—Russian landowner, monarchist, a leader of the Octobrist Party ("Union of October 17th").—369-70
- Roland-Holst, Henriette* (1869-1952)—Dutch Socialist and writer.—84
- Romanov, Mikhail Alexandrovich* (1878-1918)—Grand Duke, brother of the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II.—181
- Romanov, Nicholas*—see *Nicholas II (Romanov)*.
- Romanovs*—dynasty of Russian tsars and emperors ruling the country from 1613 to 1917.—65, 67, 90, 173-74, 178, 181, 183
- Rubanovich, Ilya Adolfovich* (1860-1920)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, member of the International Socialist Bureau. During the First World War (1914-18) a social-chauvinist.—63, 91
- Rusanov, Nikolai Sergeyevich* (b. 1859)—publicist, member of the Narodnaya Volya Party, later a Socialist-Revolutionary.—199
- Ryabushinsky, Pavel Pavlovich* (b. 1871)—big Moscow banker and industrialist, one of the counter-revolutionary leaders during the Civil War.—234
- 8
- Saint-Simon, Henri Claude* (1760-1825)—French utopian socialist.—15

- Scheidemann, Philipp* (1865-1939)—one of the leaders of the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the German Social-Democratic Party. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—176, 197, 199, 352, 400-01, 403-04, 411, 418
- Schröder, Karl* (1884-1950)—German Social-Democrat, later a Communist; joined the Left opposition of Laufenberg-Wolffheim and started preaching anarcho-syndicalist views. In 1919 he was expelled from the Communist Party of Germany.—366
- Sembat, Marcel* (1862-1922)—one of the leaders of the French Socialist Party, journalist; during the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—96, 197, 199
- Semkovsky, S. (Bronstein, Semyon Yulyevich)* (b. 1882)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand.—147-48
- Serrati, Giacinto Menotti* (1872-1926)—a prominent figure in the Italian working-class movement, and one of the leaders of the Italian Socialist Party. During the First World War he adopted an internationalist stand; he headed the Italian delegation to the Second Congress of the International and in 1924 joined the Italian Communist Party.—392
- Sher, U. U.* (1884-1940)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik.—340
- Shingaryov, Andrei Ivanovich* (1869-1918)—one of the leaders of the Cadet Party; a Zemstvo official.—174, 247
- Skobelev, Matvei Ivanovich* (1885-1939)—Russian Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 he entered the bourgeois Provisional Government. Subsequently he split away from the Mensheviks.—198
- Šmeral, Bogumir* (1880-1941)—member of the Czechoslovak and international Communist movement.—461
- Smirnov, Y.*—see *Gurevich, E. L.*
- Snowden, Philip* (1864-1937)—English politician; author of works on the labour movement. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand.—444
- Spiridonova, Maria Alexandrovna* (1884-1941)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. In 1906 she was sentenced to penal servitude for attempting to kill the pogrom organiser Luzhenovsky. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 she became one of the organisers of the Left Wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries.—227, 435, 437-38
- Stalin (Jugashvili), Joseph Vissarionovich* (1879-1953)—477, 481
- Stauning, Thorwald August Marinus* (1873-1942)—Danish statesman, one of the Right-wing leaders of the Danish

Social-Democrats and the Second International, publicist. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—197

*Stolypin, Pyotr Arkadyevich (Stolypin the Hangman)* (1862-1911)—a statesman in tsarist Russia. From 1906 to 1911 Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister of the Interior. His name is connected with a period of rampant political reaction in which wide use was made of capital punishment (Stolypin reaction 1907-10).—179

*Struve, Pyotr Bergardovich* (1870-1944)—Russian economist and publicist; one of the leaders of the Cadet Party. In 1890s he was a prominent "legal Marxist".—33, 39, 61, 154, 190, 244, 398, 431, 443

*Sukhanov (Gimmer), Nikolai Nikolayevich* (b. 1882)—economist and publicist; Menshevik.—501, 503, 505

## T

*Tkachov, Pyotr Nikitich* (1844-1885)—one of the ideologists of revolutionary Narodism; advocate of Blanquist tactics in Russian conditions.—31

*Trotsky (Bronstein), Lev Davidovich* (1879-1940)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik. During the First World War he adopted a Centrist stand. He was admitted to the Bolshevik Party at the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) Congress in 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution he held re-

sponsible posts; he waged a fierce factional struggle against the general Party line and against Lenin's programme of building socialism, maintaining that socialism could not be victorious in the USSR. After exposing Trotskyism as a petty-bourgeois deviation, the Communist Party eliminated it as an organisational force and put an end to its ideological influence. In 1927 Trotsky was expelled from the Party and in 1929 deported from the USSR for his anti-Soviet activity.—84

*Tsereteli, Irakli Georgiyevich* (1882-1959)—one of the Menshevik leaders. In May 1917 he entered the bourgeois Provisional Government.—198, 200, 220, 226, 239, 244, 254

*Tugan*—see *Tugan-Baranovsky*.

*Tugan-Baranovsky, Mikhail Ivanovich* (1865-1919)—Russian economist, in the 1890s a "legal Marxist" and later an active member of the Cadet Party.—216

*Turati, Filippo* (1857-1932)—leader of the Italian working-class movement; one of the organisers of the Italian Socialist Party (1892) and leader of its Right, reformist wing.—351-52, 392, 444

## V

*V. I.—n.*—see *Ivanshin, V. P.*

*V. Ilyin*—see *Lenin, V. I.*

*Vaillant, Edouard Marie* (1840-1915)—member of the Paris Commune; subsequently one of

the founders and leaders of the Socialist Party of France. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand.—96, 393

*Vandervelde, Emile* (1866-1938)—opportunist leader of the Workers' Party of Belgium and of the Second International, Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau. During the First World War took up a social-chauvinist stand and joined the bourgeois government of Belgium.—94-95, 197, 199

*Vollmar, Georg Heinrich* (1850-1922)—one of the leaders of the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany; an ideologist of reformism and revisionism.—9

## W

*Weber, Max* (1864-1920)—German sociologist, historian and economist, an apologist of capitalism.—168

*Wendel, Friedrich* (1886-1960)—German Left Social-Democrat. On joining the Communist Party of Germany, he adhered to the Left opposition led by Laufenberg and Wolffheim; he propagated anarcho-syndicalist views. In 1919 he was expelled from the Communist Party.—366

*Vilhelm II* (1859-1941)—German emperor and king of Prussia (1888-1918).—83, 177, 271, 275

*Wolffheim, Fritz*—German Social-Democrat, publicist; one

of the leaders of the Left opposition in the Communist Party of Germany which propagated anarcho-syndicalist views. In 1919 he was expelled from the Communist Party.—366

*Wrangel, Pyotr Nikolayevich* (1878-1928)—tsarist general, monarchist. During the foreign military intervention and Civil War he was a hireling of the English, French and American imperialists. From April to November 1920 he was Commander-in-Chief of the white-guard armed forces in the South of Russia.—477

## Y

*Yermansky, A. (Kogan, Osip Arkadyevich)* (1866-1941)—Social-Democrat, Menshevik.—518

*Yudenich, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1862-1933)—tsarist general; during the years of the Civil War he headed counter-revolutionary activities in the North-West of Russia.—324, 371, 477

## Z

*Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna* (1849-1919)—prominent participant in the Narodnik movement and subsequently in the Social-Democratic movement in Russia. She took part in the foundation of the first Russian Marxist organisation, the Emancipation of Labour group. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1903 she became a Menshevik.—398

*Zensinov, U. M.* (b. 1881)—a Socialist-Revolutionary leader.—19

*Zhelyabov, Andrei Ivanovich* (1850-1881)—Russian revolutionary; founder and leader of the Narodnaya Volya Party.—29

*Zinoviev (Radomyslsky), Grigori Yevseyevich* (1883-1936)—a member of the R.S.D.L.P. from 1901, Bolshevik. After the defeat of the Revolution of 1905-07 he took up a conciliatory stand towards the liquidators, Otszovists and Trotskyites. During the First World War he adopted an internationalist stand. In October 1917 he published, in his own name and that of Kamenev, in the semi-Menshevik newspaper *Novoye Zhizn*, a statement declaring their disagreement with the CC's resolution on the

armed uprising, which served to divulge to the bourgeois Provisional Government a secret decision of the Party and was a betrayal of the revolution.—101, 480

*Zubatov, Sergei Vasilyevich* (1864-1917)—colonel of the gendarmerie, Chief of the Moscow Department of the secret political police in the 1900s; in 1901-03 he organised the police-sponsored workers' unions with the aim of diverting the workers from the path of revolutionary struggle and educating them in the spirit of monarchism.—380

*Züdekum, Albert* (1871-1944)—an opportunist leader of the German Social-Democratic Party, revisionist. During the First World War he adopted an extreme social-chauvinist stand.—96